



PEARLAND PROSPERITY

February 2024



PEARLAND PROSPERITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Executive Summary

Strategic Plan

Supporting Documents

Research Executive Summary

Implementation Guidelines

To view the entire plan and updates, visit PearlandProsperity.com.

Prepared by Broad Ripple Strategies



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PEARLAND PROSPERITY UPDATE

The City of Pearland has become a “community of choice” in Greater Houston by offering residents excellent schools, good access to job centers, and a high quality of life in one of the nation’s most racially and ethnically diverse communities. Leaders in Pearland understood, however, that they could not afford to rest on these laurels as the community matures and regional, national, and global competitive realities are rapidly evolving.

Accordingly, partners came together around a strategic planning process to update Pearland Prosperity, the community’s holistic economic development strategy adopted in early 2020. This signature program – spearheaded by the Pearland Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) in partnership with the City of Pearland, the Pearland Chamber of Commerce, and others – has been an important catalyst for the forward-thinking change.

A COMPREHENSIVE PROCESS

The Pearland Prosperity Update process began with Phase 1: Research and Input. Activities included a review of existing plans and studies, new quantitative research, more than 20 one-on-one interviews with community leaders, a focus group with Pearland Young Professionals, and an online survey. Key findings from Phase 1 directly informed the second phase of the process: the development of the Pearland Prosperity Update strategic plan.

PHASE 1 KEY FINDINGS

- Economic development wins have diversified Pearland’s economy.
- Pearland’s workforce and diverse talent base are key assets to support future growth.
- Workforce development progress has created a platform for future success.
- Supporting existing businesses and investing in development sites and infrastructure remain priorities.
- New capacity to support entrepreneurs represents a significant opportunity.
- Pearland offers a strong value proposition, but competition from nearby communities is increasing.
- As Pearland matures as a community, development opportunities and needs are shifting.
- Given the preceding two bullets, Pearland must take action to remain a “community of choice.”
- Stakeholders agree that quality of place enhancements are a key factor in maintaining this status.



COMMUNITY GOAL

CORE GOAL

"Pearland will be the community of choice for
PEOPLE and **BUSINESS** in our region."

This Core Goal statement is consistent with stakeholders' affinity for the "community of choice" concept and requests to "place people at the center" of the updated strategic framework.





KEY INITIATIVES

Partners in Pearland can pursue the Core Goal by advancing 11 Key Initiatives that correspond to specific programs and/or investments. Five Key Initiatives are oriented primarily toward making Pearland a community of choice for businesses while six Key Initiatives are geared toward attracting and retaining residents. It should be emphasized that the ordering of the Key Initiatives does not imply hierarchy or priority.

PLACES TO GATHER

There is a strong consensus among Pearland's stakeholders that Pearland must act strategically to enhance its quality of place if it is to be a community of choice for jobs and talent.

Strategic Recommendations:

- A-1 Cultivate relationships with key private-sector partners for creating gathering spaces
- A-2 Actively pursue a vibrant mixed-use entertainment district in the Lower Kirby District
- A-3 Work with Pearland Town Center stakeholders to ensure the area's long-term success and vibrancy
- A-4 Position additional sites around Pearland as potential locations for new quality of place amenities

OLD TOWN REVITALIZATION

Among the many possible "place" upgrades discussed during the stakeholder engagement process and subsequent meetings with Pearland's leaders, no issue received stronger support than the desire to revitalize Old Town.

Strategic Recommendations:

- B-1 Continue to implement infrastructure improvements in the Old Town and SH 35 Corridor areas
- B-2 Pursue near-term opportunities to leverage new residential development in Old Town
- B-3 Identify a design solution for the Broadway Corridor that is conducive to walkable development
- B-4 Create and advance a master plan for the Old Town area
- B-5 Ensure that tools, resources, and staff capacity are available to support Old Town revitalization



INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT

As Pearland begins a new era of relatively slower growth and maturation, “infill” development and redevelopment will be issues that come to the forefront.

Strategic Recommendations:

- C-1 Leverage and promote software tool to improve the transparency of the development process
- C-2 Create additional technical assistance to ease the development process
- C-3 Ensure that Pearland’s commercial properties are well-maintained and in compliance with codes
- C-4 Encourage multifamily and compact residential uses on infill and redevelopment sites
- C-5 Actively recruit residential developments and supportive amenities that will allow Pearland’s residents to “age in place”

MOBILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Continuing to invest in infrastructure that enhances mobility and quality of place in Pearland. This Initiative will help ensure the community’s long-term health and fiscal sustainability.

Strategic Recommendations:

- D-1 Continue to support the long-term maintenance of Pearland’s infrastructure
- D-2 Ensure the successful activation of the Broadway / FM 518 widening and reconstruction project
- D-3 Advance the planning, design, and construction of priority road projects
- D-4 Continue to seek state and federal funding and other resources for transportation projects
- D-5 Seek to accelerate activation of the Multi-Modal Master Plan and Clear Creek Trail Master Plan
- D-6 Advance the development and activation of the Pearland Transit Needs Assessment and Plan
- D-7 Continue to advance infrastructure projects that improve drainage and stormwater management



PARKS AND RECREATION

Parks and recreation opportunities play an important role in a community's ability to attract and retain talented workers – and the companies that want to hire them.

Strategic Recommendations:

- E-1 Continue to implement the Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan
- E-2 Ensure that Pearland's parks have sufficient resources and staff
- E-3 Seek to expand Pearland's sports fields and ensure equitable distribution across the community
- E-4 Evaluate tools to ensure the long-term sustainability of privately owned park facilities

CULTURAL ARTS

Quality of place and quality of life amenities like arts and cultural spaces, facilities, events, and unique, walkable destination districts have emerged as critical competitive criteria to attract and retain talent.

Strategic Recommendations:

- F-1 Support the implementation of the City of Pearland's approved Cultural Arts Master Plan
- F-2 Assess local support for establishing a branded cultural arts district in Pearland
- F-3 Continue efforts to create a "sense of place" in Pearland activity districts and public spaces

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Activities such as business attraction and marketing and business retention and expansion (BRE) are vital to overall success in job and wealth creation.

Strategic Recommendations:

- G-1 Continue "core" business attraction and marketing initiatives to grow primary jobs
- G-2 Enhance targeted marketing efforts for the biotechnology and medical manufacturing sectors
- G-3 Continue to engage Pearland's primary employers through the BizConnect program
- G-4 Expand "internal communications" capabilities to reach a broader range of Pearland stakeholders
- G-5 Implement recommendations from the 2022 Pearland Retail Analysis



PEARLAND INNOVATION HUB

Stakeholders said they would like to see PIH continue to evolve its programming to serve existing and prospective entrepreneurs in Pearland and complement the many well-established entrepreneurial ecosystem resources in the Greater Houston region.

Strategic Recommendations:

- H-1 Position the Pearland Innovation Hub's location at Spacio.us as the service delivery "focal point"
- H-2 Right-size the Pro-Active Coaching Program and enhance efforts to identify coaches and members
- H-3 Increase networking opportunities and special events for Pearland's entrepreneurs
- H-4 Connect entrepreneurs to professional services and other regional ecosystem resources
- H-5 Support diverse retail and hospitality startups that enhance Pearland's quality of place

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Pearland's key talent pipeline partners must be connected to and aligned with the business community to support economic growth and increased opportunities for residents to thrive.

Strategic Recommendations:

- I-1 Continue to provide Pearland's employers with customized workforce assistance
- I-2 Develop and promote a community resource network (CRN)
- I-3 Establish a formal partnership framework connecting business and education
- I-4 Create formal Career Pathways to create opportunities for residents and support key sectors
- I-5 Continue to support the Work in Pearland initiative and online portal
- I-6 Pursue the development of physical training spaces in and around Pearland



DIVERSE TALENT

Pearland leaders feel that ongoing diversity programming should be continued, but with a more focused and systematic approach that acknowledges issues of race and ethnicity but also recognizes diversities of education, age, income, and other determinants.

Strategic Recommendations:

- J-1 Sustain and enhance the Pearland Chamber of Commerce's diversity initiatives
- J-2 Enhance the Work in Pearland platform to attract diverse talent to Pearland
- J-3 Expand networking opportunities for diverse Pearland residents

SITE DEVELOPMENT

Maintaining an inventory of suitable industrial and commercial sites is a prerequisite for most economic development projects that create new jobs and private capital investment.

Strategic Recommendations:

- K-1 Continue to position the Lower Kirby District and SH 35 as priority areas for development
- K-2 Continue to proactively assemble and prepare development sites
- K-3 Continue to ensure that sites are supported by best-in-class infrastructure and amenities

To view the entire plan and updates, visit PearlandProsperity.com.



STRATEGIC PLAN



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PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Pearland Prosperity Update will be carried out through a three-phase process that began in July 2023 and will conclude in January 2024. It is led by the Pearland Prosperity Committee, a dynamic group of community leaders tasked with sharing their perspectives and insights, reviewing research and input findings, and making key decisions about the priorities and strategies that will define the updated strategy. The Pearland City Council, Pearland Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) Board of Directors, and Pearland Chamber Board of Directors are providing input and oversight throughout the process.

Phase 1: Research and Input

Successful economic development strategies are built upon a solid understanding of a community's competitive opportunities and challenges. This phase blended existing research, stakeholder input, and new quantitative analysis to develop the Research Executive Summary document that highlights the most important competitive realities in Pearland and their implications for strategy development.

Phase 2: Strategy Development

This phase will result in the development of a next-level strategy for Pearland that blends ongoing initiatives that warrant continuation with new priority programs and investment. The strategy will establish priorities for partners in Pearland to pursue in the next five years. The strategy is expected to be finalized in December.

Phase 3: Implementation Guidelines

While the updated Pearland Prosperity strategy will determine “what” partners in Pearland will do strategically for the next five years, the Implementation Guidelines will prescribe “how” that will be accomplished. This phase will consider the costs, capacity, and workflows impacting implementation partners. The Implementation Guidelines will be developed in consultation with leaders from the PEDC, City of Pearland, Chamber and other partners that will play a direct role in activating the plan. This phase is expected to conclude in January 2024.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Pearland has become a “community of choice” in Greater Houston by offering residents excellent schools, good access to job centers, and a high quality of life in one of the nation’s most racially and ethnically diverse communities. Leaders in Pearland understand, however, that they cannot afford to rest on these laurels as the community matures and regional, national, and global competitive realities are rapidly evolving.

Accordingly, partners have come together around a strategic planning process to update Pearland Prosperity, the community’s holistic economic development strategy which was adopted in early 2020. This signature program – spearheaded by the Pearland Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) in partnership with the City of Pearland, the Pearland Chamber of Commerce, and others – has been an important catalyst for the forward-thinking change. A three-phase, seven-month process will result in the creation of a refreshed Pearland Prosperity plan that will guide the community’s strategic actions for the next five years. This document, the Pearland Prosperity Update, represents the culmination of the process’ second phase.

ABOUT BROAD RIPPLE STRATEGIES

Broad Ripple Strategies (BRS) has been selected as Pearland’s partner for the strategic planning process. BRS represents nearly 30 years of experience crafting community, workforce, and economic development strategies that build consensus, drive investment, and get results. Our team has helped more than 65 clients develop nearly 100 strategies for community and economic development, talent and workforce sustainability, and quality of place. BRS’ principals have worked everywhere from small towns and rural areas to major regions such as Des Moines, IA and Nashville, TN. BRS principals Alex Pearlstein and Matt DeVeau worked with stakeholders in Pearland to develop the Pearland Prosperity and Pearland 20/20 strategies. Elsewhere in Texas, our team has previously worked in Arlington, Austin, San Marcos, Waco, and Wichita Falls.

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Pearland Prosperity Update will be a holistic economic development strategy that will guide the community's actions for the next five years. It will seek to make Pearland a more competitive place for jobs, talent, and investment and raise levels of prosperity and improve quality of life for its current and future residents. This "Update" is a follow-up to the first Pearland Prosperity plan (launched in February 2020) and its predecessor, the Pearland 20/20 strategy. These previous strategic planning efforts have led to numerous successful outcomes for Pearland and its residents.

The Pearland Prosperity Update builds upon the ideas and concepts from Phase 1 research and input and multiple conversations with the Pearland Prosperity Committee, Pearland City Council, and PEDC Board. Before proceeding to the strategy, it is first useful to provide additional context about the considerations that influenced its creation.

HOW THE STRATEGY WAS DEVELOPED

The Pearland Prosperity Update process began with Phase 1: Research and Input. Activities during this phase included a review of numerous existing plans and studies, new quantitative research, more than 20 one-on-one interviews with community leaders, a focus group with Pearland Young Professionals, an invitation-only online survey that solicited feedback about the Pearland Prosperity initiative and its implementation. Key findings from Phase 1 were synthesized into the Research Executive Summary. This document consists of two parts: a Competitive Realities section that provides a concise summary of the community's opportunities and challenges and the Implementation Evaluation, which focuses on high-level themes from the activation of the previous Pearland Prosperity strategy. The Research Executive Summary is available as Appendix B in this document; key findings are summarized briefly on the following page.

The key findings from Phase 1 directly informed the second phase of the process: the development of the Pearland Prosperity Update. In November, members of the Pearland Prosperity Committee – along with senior staff from the City of Pearland and PEDC – evaluated an initial draft of the updated strategy. Based on feedback from these stakeholders, BRS developed a revised draft that the Pearland Prosperity Committee, City Council, PEDC Board, and Chamber Board evaluated at a series of meetings in December and January. BRS has incorporated the feedback from these meetings into this final strategy document.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS FROM THE RESEARCH EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Research Executive Summary provides an updated look at Pearland's competitiveness as a place to live, work, and do business and identifies key successes and challenges related to the implementation of the previous Pearland Prosperity strategy. In doing so, it highlights findings that have implications for the development of the Pearland Prosperity Update. While stakeholders should refer to the Research Executive Summary in Appendix B for a full discussion of these issues, it is helpful to highlight some of the most important findings that influenced the development of the strategy.

- Economic development wins have diversified Pearland's economy. "Traded sector" firms such as manufacturers and headquarter operations are coveted because they bring new wealth into a local economy by "exporting" goods and services to other domestic and foreign markets. Although government and proprietary data likely do not reflect the true extent of the progress, the PEDC and its partners have assisted numerous traded sector firms with locating and/or expanding in Pearland in recent years. These project wins have the added benefit of enhancing the City's fiscal sustainability and providing a wider range of job opportunities for local residents.
- Pearland's workforce is a key asset to support future growth. Pearland's adult population is highly educated relative to the national average, and the community has high concentrations of residents who work in fields such as engineering, information technology, logistics, and so on. A wide variety of businesses are likely to value locating within close proximity to such a skilled and educated workforce.
- Pearland's diverse talent is a major strength. As the United States becomes more diverse, businesses increasingly value the ability to attract and retain employees from a wide variety of backgrounds and perspectives. Of the 632 Census places (cities, towns, etc.) with at least 65,000 residents as of the 2020 Census, Pearland was one of just 33 communities with at least 10 percent of its population in each of the nation's four largest racial and ethnic groups: Hispanic or Latino, White, Black, and Asian.
- Workforce development progress has created a platform for future success. Stakeholders praised recent efforts to strengthen connections and collaboration between businesses and education and training providers. Said one individual, "In the past 12-14 months, we've seen more workforce development progress than we've seen in the previous 10 years." Input participants said the staff and programmatic capacity now in place at the PEDC and the Chamber provides the community with an opportunity to go even further in this critical area.

- Continued investment in quality sites and infrastructure is required to “remain in the game.” Stakeholders noted that Lower Kirby’s master planning and branding has been critical to its success as it offers a differentiated presentation and “feel” relative to nearby unincorporated areas. With the supply of land in Lower Kirby limited, Pearland must continue to develop high-quality sites in other areas of the community to remain competitive for future projects.
- Supporting existing businesses continues to be a priority. Stakeholders generally praised BizConnect, the community’s business retention and expansion (BRE) program that is a joint initiative of the PEDC and the Chamber. Stakeholders said that in addition to these formal efforts, Pearland should seek efforts to support smaller incumbent firms, particularly by building upon recent progress to make permitting and zoning processes easier and more transparent.
- New capacity to support entrepreneurs represents a significant opportunity. The Pearland Innovation Hub is the community’s formal effort to support entrepreneurs seeking to start, grow, and sustain businesses in Pearland. While the initiative is itself still in “startup mode,” stakeholders said there is an opportunity to leverage the Hub’s new location at the Spacio.us coworking community to adjust programming and support the local entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- A strong value proposition, but competition is increasing. Excellent public schools, (relatively) affordable housing stock, public safety, and proximity to job centers such as TMC were cited as top community strengths in nearly every conversation. Other high-performing communities can offer a similar set of advantages, however, and as Pearland’s single-family residential construction boom has wound down, building activity has rapidly increased in nearby communities to the south – a dynamic unlike anything observed in more than four decades of building permit data.
- Pearland must take action to remain a “community of choice.” Input participants identified several internal and external threats to Pearland’s status as a destination for talent. Given the growth dynamics described above, stakeholders expressed concerns that younger families may bypass Pearland for communities further to the south that can offer more affordable homes and increased retail options. Input participants noted that areas of Pearland developed decades ago are at risk of falling behind from a “curb appeal” perspective without significant public and private reinvestment. Stakeholders also said that relative to other “talent magnets” in Greater Houston, Pearland lacks true “differentiator” amenities from a quality of life and quality of place perspective, an increasingly important consideration as consumer preferences show signs of

shifting as remote and hybrid work become more prevalent in some fields.

- Stakeholders agree that quality of place enhancements are needed. Given the threats described in the previous bullet, stakeholders broadly agree that Pearland must act strategically enhance its quality of place in order to continue to be an attractive destination for jobs and talent. The Pearland Prosperity Update includes a clear, achievable set of quality of place priorities based on input and feedback from Pearland's leaders.
- As Pearland matures as a community, development opportunities and needs are shifting. While large tracts of land suitable for residential development are now largely nonexistent, stakeholders said there are numerous opportunities for "infill" residential and mixed-use development on smaller tracts of land. Redevelopment was also a major theme in input. Input participants expressed a desire to pursue opportunities to redevelop underutilized and/or outdated commercial properties, understanding that doing so can come with significant challenges relative to "greenfield" development. The importance of redevelopment is strongly connected with a need to maintain and upgrade infrastructure. Stakeholders said that Pearland must continue to invest in ensuring its infrastructure is well-maintained and – in older areas of the community – that sidewalks, drainage, etc. are up to modern standards.

PEARLAND PROSPERITY UPDATE

Based on the key findings from research and stakeholder input detailed on the preceding pages, it is reasonable to organize the Pearland Prosperity Update around the following strategic framework. At the heart of the framework is a Core Goal:

“Pearland will be the community of choice for PEOPLE and BUSINESS in our region.”

This Core Goal statement is consistent with stakeholders’ affinity for the “community of choice” tagline and requests to “place people at the center” of the updated strategic framework. Partners in Pearland can pursue this Core Goal by advancing **11 Key Initiatives** that correspond to specific programs and/or investments. Six Key Initiatives are oriented primarily toward making Pearland a community of choice for businesses while five Key Initiatives are geared toward attracting and retaining residents.

It should be noted that most of the **11 Key Initiatives are narrower in scope than the seven “Focus Areas”** of the previous Pearland Prosperity framework. In other words, while the Pearland Prosperity Update represents an ambitious next step for the community, the inclusion of more issues or strategic “buckets” in the framework does not imply a commensurate increase in the size of the proposed program of work.

The remainder of this document describes each of the Key Initiatives in further detail, including Strategic Recommendations for partners in Pearland to implement (for selected Recommendations, “comparative examples” are provided in Appendix A). **It should be emphasized that the ordering of the Key Initiatives in the document does not imply hierarchy or priority – a dynamic reflected with the circular nature of the graphic.** It is also important to note that there are numerous efforts underway in Pearland to address many of these issues. This is partially by design, as a strategic plan of this nature can be likened to “jumping on a moving train.” Additionally, there are many important activities that fall outside the scope of a holistic economic development strategy. This proposed framework is designed to complement these existing efforts as opposed to duplicating work.

PROPOSED STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



PLACES TO GATHER

WHAT: The following is an excerpt from the Pearland 20/20 Strategic Plan, which was developed in 2013:

“As stakeholders noted often in this strategic process, the time has come for Pearland to complement the development of physical infrastructure to support growth with a focus on cultural and lifestyle amenities for residents and businesses looking for a more complete community to call home.”

While that sentence is a decade old, it could just as easily have been written about the current strategic planning process for the Pearland Prosperity Update. Simply put, Pearland stakeholders have long understood that their community needs “quality of place” enhancements. But in addition to external factors such as the pandemic and rising construction and borrowing costs, building consensus around exactly what to do and how to fund it has been challenging. There is renewed urgency around these questions, however, as Pearland matures as a community and competition for talent with nearby fast-growing communities is increasing. Said one leader, “We could soon be in a position where we’re not a community of choice.”

A substantial portion of the conversation at recent meetings with the Pearland Prosperity Committee, Pearland City Council, and PEDC Board centered on specific quality of place priorities to include in the updated strategic framework. **One major theme that resonated in these conversations is that Pearland currently lacks places to gather. Input participants said they would like to see a range of opportunities to come together, ranging from new or enhanced venues for live music to “third spaces” such as restaurants and coffee shops to informally gather and socialize.**

Making progress in this Key Initiative begins with **building and maintaining relationships with private sector stakeholders** including property owners, developers, investors, and businesses to encourage the creation of new gathering places and other quality of place enhancements in Pearland. New developments and investments should be **led by the private sector, though it should be acknowledged up front that some form of public incentive may be necessary** to make a specific project viable. While public investment in any project does not come without risks or opportunity cost, many communities in Greater Houston and beyond have successfully leveraged public-private partnerships to create the kind of vibrant gathering places that are necessary to attract top talent.

Stakeholders identified specific opportunities and locations for creating new gathering places. The **eastern portion of the Lower Kirby District** adjacent to the Bass Pro Shops location has long been identified as an

area that could accommodate a vibrant mixed-use entertainment district. Stakeholders also expressed significant concerns that shifts in the retail market could jeopardize the long-term future of Class B and Class C shopping centers – **Pearland Town Center** included. This sentiment was largely echoed in the 2022 Retail Analysis, and input participants expressed a desire to continue working with the Town Center’s owners on how to position the area for long-term success.

Finally, it should be noted that while **Old Town** was identified as another prime location for creating new gathering spaces, it is included as a **separate Key Initiative** due to major differences in the opportunities, challenges, and potential strategic approaches in that area relative to the locations referenced in this section.

WHY: There is a strong consensus among Pearland’s stakeholders that Pearland must act strategically to enhance its quality of place if it is to be a community of choice for jobs and talent. Doing so is indeed an important competitive need. Successful communities around the country, including some in Greater Houston, have increasingly sought to create walkable, mixed-use activity hubs to respond to long-term shifts in consumer preferences. With the rise of work-from-home and hybrid work arrangements in the wake of the pandemic, the need for a variety of gathering places has grown more pronounced, as talented workers are seeking out a variety of lifestyle amenities closer to home – from coffee shops and other “third spaces” from which to work to recreational opportunities and places to socialize when off the clock.

Building consensus around major quality of place investments is not always easy when public subsidies are required to make a project viable. But in many cases, these costs can be far outweighed by other economic and quality of life benefits that such investments can bestow on a community. Additionally, if Pearland is to remain a highly desirable community in the future, it must consider how it is appealing to a wide variety of current and future residents.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

A-1 Cultivate relationships with key private-sector partners for creating gathering spaces

- Through the PEDC and its partners, develop and maintain strong working relationships with key property owners as well as local and external developers, investors, and businesses that could play a role in creating vibrant gathering places and otherwise enhancing quality of place in Pearland
- Seek opportunities to connect well-qualified development partners, investors, and end-users with property owners to support the creation of gathering places

A-2 Actively pursue a vibrant mixed-use entertainment district in the Lower Kirby District

- Continue to work with property owners in the eastern portion of the Lower Kirby District to pursue opportunities to create a mixed-use entertainment district in the area; ideally the district would include retail, entertainment, multifamily residential, restaurants, and a water amenity
- Seek opportunities to support live music at the entertainment district through a formal venue and/or programming of public spaces; ensure that live music venues and/or events are well-planned and compatible with adjacent uses and developments
- Support property owners in identifying highly qualified developers that can execute a successful development consistent with the community's vision
- If a viable opportunity does not emerge organically, consider working with property owners to issue a request for qualifications (RFQ) to proactively seek development partners; ensure that the RFQ clearly establishes desired project outcomes and the anticipated level of public-sector participation
- With a preferred development partner identified, work with the PEDC, Pearland City Council, management districts, and other relevant stakeholders to determine what public-sector improvements (infrastructure, streetscapes, drainage, etc.) are needed to ensure project viability and success
- Ensure that the entertainment district prioritizes walkability and connects to park and trail amenities

A-3 Work with Pearland Town Center stakeholders to ensure the area's long-term success and vibrancy

- Through the PEDC, engage the owners of the Pearland Town Center to identify potential enhancements that will ensure the long-term relevance and vitality of the area
- Potential upgrades could include new multifamily residential development, activating the vacant 17-acre parcel to the south of the existing mall, upgrading the detention pond to create waterfront dining opportunities, and so on
- Evaluate the need and viability of public-private partnerships to facilitate these upgrades, with the desired return being the long-term sustainability of the sales and property tax revenues that the Town Center produces
- Ensure that Town Center is complementary as opposed to directly competitive with the proposed entertainment district at Lower Kirby (see Recommendation A-2)

A-4 Position additional sites around Pearland as potential locations for new quality of place amenities

- Leveraging the relationships established in Recommendation A-1, market additional sites in Pearland as potential destinations for gathering places and similar quality of place amenities; specific sites should include the intersection of FM 518/Broadway and Cullen Boulevard and City-owned parcels and other properties along the Pearland Parkway corridor

OLD TOWN REVITALIZATION

WHAT: The previous Key Initiative identified a need to create more formal and informal “gathering places” to enhance Pearland’s quality of place and competitiveness for jobs and talent. **This Key Initiative focuses on an additional opportunity and stakeholder desire that stood out as a clear priority input: revitalization the Old Town area.**

Old Town, sometimes referred to as “the Old Townsite” is a district in the eastern quadrant of Pearland bounded by Orange Street to the north, Walnut Street to the south, Galveston Street on the east and Austin Street on the west. Contrary to the image its name might evoke, Old Town is not an intact historic downtown or main street. (It is so named because it was the site of the original town plat for Pearland in 1894.) The area does, however, boast a street grid and small lot sizes that are conducive to walkability, a relative rarity in Pearland. Additionally, stakeholders said the area has significant symbolic importance as the place of the community’s founding.

As previously discussed, Old Town is incorporated into the strategic framework as its own Key Initiative due to its special blend of opportunities and challenges and the differentiated strategic approach that will be required to revitalize the area. Because the area consists of small lots with many different owners, full-scale redevelopment is unlikely to occur in the near future. **Stakeholders acknowledge that revitalizing Old Town will be a long-term process, with incremental efforts occurring over many years or even decades.** Additionally, because of the complex ownership situation of commercial properties in the area, **significant revitalization is unlikely to occur without financial, staff, and technical support from the public sector.** To pursue this Key Initiative, stakeholders must be willing to commit to public investments that may not bear a direct financial return for many years, if at all. Even when presented with these caveats, however, most stakeholders contacted as part of the Pearland Prosperity Update process expressed a strong desire to move forward with revitalization efforts.

Fortunately, the area is already receiving an influx of public and private investment. In 2023, the PEDC committed to devote 20 percent of its annual sales tax revenue to making infrastructure upgrades in targeted commercial areas of Pearland, including Old Town. The PEDC and City of Pearland also entered into a development agreement with Sullivan Brothers, a private firm redeveloping a large area South of Broadway Street and East of Main Street into a specialty housing development with potential to spur further walkable, mixed-use development. A key portion of this Key Initiative will be **implementing needed infrastructure upgrades and harnessing near-term momentum** from the Sullivan Brothers development – the first major residential investment in the area in many years.

On a longer timeframe, stakeholders understand that **additional planning is needed** to identify a course of action for Old Town. First and foremost, input participants said there is a need to determine a **design solution for Broadway Street that is conducive to walkability**; Broadway is currently a five-lane road with relatively high traffic speeds and limited appeal to pedestrians. The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) is studying a potential “one-way pair” concept that would transform Broadway and Walnut Streets into one-way streets; stakeholders said completing this study is a critical first step. And while the SH 35 Corridor Redevelopment Plan includes some recommendations for Old Town, input participants said there is a need for a new master plan for the area, which was last studied in detail in 2005. This **study should identify specific redevelopment tools** that will be needed to advance long-term redevelopment, including potential incentives, financial tools, and organizational capacity (e.g., a redevelopment authority, nonprofit development agency, or similar entity). Critically, **additional staff capacity will be needed to coordinate redevelopment activities** in the immediate future and long-term.

WHY: As previously discuss, stakeholders understand that quality of place improvements will be crucial to maintaining Pearland’s status as a community of choice within Greater Houston. Among the many possible “place” upgrades discussed during the stakeholder engagement process and subsequent meetings with Pearland’s leaders, no issue received stronger support than the desire to revitalize Old Town. Input participants said there are near-term opportunities to leverage the Sullivan Brothers residential development to create more gathering places and amenities for residents, particularly those on the east side of Pearland. Over a longer timeframe, a successful redevelopment of the Old Town area would have the potential to create an activity hub that is differentiated from other nearby entertainment, dining, and cultural options.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

B-1 Continue to implement infrastructure improvements in the Old Town and SH 35 Corridor areas

- Leverage PEDC’s commitment to devote 20 percent of its revenues to infrastructure upgrades in targeted areas to enhance infrastructure and utilities in Old Town; because PEDC is statutorily limited to funding commercial and mixed-use projects, seek additional funds to upgrade residential areas
- Whenever possible, seek to leverage upgrades to implement attractive streetscapes with sidewalks, street furniture, lighting, etc.
- Continue to advance recommendations in the SH 35 Corridor Redevelopment Plan to activate Old Town as a center for dining and shopping
- Work with all relevant partners to improve the environment for pedestrians

B-2 Pursue near-term opportunities to leverage new residential development in Old Town

- Work with Sullivan Brothers and nearby property owners to identify potential “follow-on” investment in residential and/or commercial developments

B-3 Identify a design solution for the Broadway Corridor that is conducive to walkable development

- Work with H-GAC to complete the “one-way pair” study for Broadway and Walnut Streets as soon as possible; ensure that the study considers the safety and desirability of walking or rolling along and across Broadway
- Work with the TxDOT and all relevant partners to identify and select a design alternative for Broadway that will be conducive to a walkable, accessible mixed-use district in the Old Town area

B-4 Create and advance a master plan for the Old Town area

- Retain a highly qualified urban design and/or land-use planning firm to create an updated master plan for the Old Town area
- Ensure that the plan includes a market analysis component and considers how regulatory frameworks, public infrastructure investments, and incentives can encourage the private sector to create high-quality redevelopment projects
- Ensure that the plan provides specific guidance on the tools and resources needed for successful implementation (see Recommendation B-5)

B-5 Ensure that tools, resources, and staff capacity are available to support Old Town revitalization

- Leverage the master plan proposed in Recommendation B-4 to identify tools and resources needed to support the long-term revitalization of Old Town
- As soon as is reasonable, create a new staff position to support redevelopment efforts in the Old Town area; this individual could also support other aspects of the Pearland Prosperity Update, including retail attraction (see Recommendation G-5) and the various redevelopment and infill development recommendations proposed in the following Key Initiative

INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT

WHAT: As Pearland begins a new era of relatively slower growth and maturation, “infill” development and redevelopment will be issues that come to the forefront. The large, undeveloped tracts of land that for decades drove rapid single-family residential expansion in Pearland are now largely spoken for. That said, there are numerous smaller parcels of land that would be difficult or impossible to assemble into a large-scale residential development site that can nevertheless support a variety of other development types.

Stakeholders also recognize that redevelopment is becoming increasingly important topic as areas of the community age. Input participants recognize that redevelopment comes with additional and often unpredictable costs relative to “greenfield” development, and older commercial properties such as strip centers may not be economically feasible if the properties are still generating sufficient rental income. That said, stakeholders said they would like to see Pearland take a proactive approach to promoting redevelopment initiatives. This Key Initiative focuses on a **range of investments and efforts to support infill and redevelopment.**

The Key Initiative also addresses an important need identified during the stakeholder engagement process: **ensuring that Pearland’s permitting and zoning processes promote both high-quality development and “speed to market.”** Input participants praised recent progress in this area, including the successful adoption of the **OpenCounter platform** and improved processes within the City of Pearland’s Community Development department; according to the PEDC, of the 88 commercial plans submitted to the department in the third quarter of 2022, 81 percent were approved on initial review and 92 percent were completed within two resubmissions. Stakeholders said they would like to see the community continue to utilize and promote this tool and provide **additional technical assistance for navigating the development process** in Pearland, particularly as the planned update to the community’s Unified Development Code (UDC) is developed and formalized. Recommendations also include **enhanced code enforcement for distressed commercial properties** and active recruitment of residential uses that allow Pearland’s residents to **“age in place,”** which many stakeholders said will be an increasingly important issue as the community’s population ages.

WHY: Stakeholder input and the latest Census population estimates and residential building permit data suggest that Pearland’s multi-decade era of rapid residential growth driven primarily by large-lot, single-family housing developments has drawn to a close. This has several implications for Pearland’s status as a community of choice. First, if Pearland is to capture a share of the additional population growth that is expected to occur in Greater Houston in the coming decades, it will need to adopt a different approach to housing that allows for

denser uses on smaller pieces of land. A diverse inventory of housing options is itself an important competitive consideration, as communities that feature high-quality housing options that appeal to a broad range of current and prospective residents will likely be at a competitive advantage for talent. In particular, stakeholders said that expanding Pearland's supply of high-quality multifamily housing and similar products will be critical to attracting and retaining young professionals.

Additionally, input participants expressed a concern that many commercial and residential areas of Pearland have begun showing their age and could be perceived as less desirable. Many areas, particularly on the east side of town, were developed prior to the adoption of development standards. Stakeholders said that Pearland could be at risk of falling behind from a "curb appeal" perspective without significant reinvestment both by the private owners and investors and the public sector.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

C-1 Leverage and promote software tool to improve the transparency of the development process

- Continue to utilize OpenCounter or a similar tool to improve the customer experience and assist businesses with a better understanding of the development rules in Pearland
- With the PEDC, City of Pearland, Pearland Chamber, and other key partners, ensure that small businesses, developers, and other relevant parties are aware of the tool
- Continue efforts to highlight the very high percentage of projects that receive approval on initial review or within two resubmissions and promote the "speed to market" approach as competitive advantages on PEDC and City websites and through other channels

C-2 Create additional technical assistance to ease the development process

- Support the planned update of Pearland's Unified Development Code (UDC) and ensure that it broadly supports economic development and quality of place enhancements
- As the updated UDC is adopted, create a companion "development toolkit" to help businesses, property owners, developers, investors, etc. navigate updated regulations; include a focus on potential site and building plans, drainage, access, etc. for smaller-scale developers interested in creating a new residential development on a small parcel (e.g., fewer than 10 acres)
- Leverage new "redevelopment" staff capacity for Old Town proposed in Recommendation B-5 to help facilitate commercial redevelopment throughout Pearland

- Evaluate the feasibility of creating or designating a “permitting concierge” role within the City’s Community Development department to help with navigating the development process

C-3 Ensure that Pearland’s commercial properties are well-maintained and in compliance with codes

- Develop an inventory of Pearland’s distressed and/or underutilized commercial properties, including their “on-paper” owners or ownership entities; utilize public records and other resources to conduct additional research to determine the “owner-in-fact” and, to the extent possible, identify a current point of contact for each underutilized or distressed property
- Work with relevant City staff to ensure that commercial properties are in compliance with all relevant codes and regulations; leverage the owner-in-fact inventory to work with property owners on potential solutions to bring their properties into compliance
- Ensure that code enforcement covers both issues of building safety and aesthetics to ensure that Pearland’s commercial properties have a positive impact on the community’s overall quality of place
- Consider increasing resources at the PEDC to acquire distressed commercial properties in instances where repairs or upgrades are not possible

C-4 Encourage multifamily and compact residential uses on infill and redevelopment sites

- Through the Pearland 2040 Comprehensive Plan and other relevant regulatory frameworks, ensure that smaller “infill” development parcels and potential redevelopment sites are able to accommodate a variety of market-driven residential development – multifamily, duplexes, townhomes, etc. – where contextually appropriate
- Continue to ensure that new residential development is of a high quality with respect to its design, construction, appearance, and so on
- Encourage projects that appeal to a broad range of current and prospective residents, particularly young professionals
- Seek opportunities to create synergies between new and existing multifamily and compact residential uses and enhanced “active transportation” infrastructure such as trails, sidewalks, etc. (see Recommendation D-4)

COMPARATIVE EXAMPLE #1: REV Birmingham (Birmingham, AL)

C-5 Actively recruit residential developments and supportive amenities that will allow Pearland's residents to "age in place"

- Develop relationships with developers and investors who specialize in creating age-restricted residential developments such as continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs), co-ops, and other forms of senior housing
- Connect these firms to local property owners and brokers to actively encourage additional age-restricted development where contextually appropriate
- Engage the Chamber's newly formed Health Care Committee to identify potential needs and opportunities to expand health care services and access for seniors aging in place

MOBILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

WHAT: This Key Initiative focuses on continuing to invest in infrastructure that enhances mobility and quality of place in Pearland. This includes both maintaining existing assets and making new investments into roadways, sidewalks and trails, drainage projects, and so on.

A key part of this work will entail continuing efforts to maintain and/or update existing infrastructure to ensure the community's long-term health and fiscal sustainability. The City of Pearland and TxDOT have also made significant progress on mobility improvements in recent years, including significant completion of upgrades to SH 288 and planning for the forthcoming reconstruction and widening of FM 518 / Broadway. The City has also advanced numerous projects with the assistance of local state funding, including Hughes Ranch Road, McHard Road, Mykawa Road, and Smith Ranch Road. Stakeholders praised this progress and said they would like to see continued investment in road projects. Because transportation infrastructure improvements are resource-intensive, advocating for and securing local, state, and federal funds and other monies will be essential to enhancing mobility and connectivity within Pearland.

In January of 2021, the City of Pearland adopted the first phase of the Multi-Modal Master Plan which is intended to “develop an efficient, safe, and connected network of active transportation routes throughout the City of Pearland.” The first phase of the plan is focused on walking and biking, with future phases to address public transit and, potentially, autonomous vehicles. This Key Initiative recommends continuing implementation of the Multi-Modal Master Plan and related strategies such as the Clear Creek Trail Master Plan. When completed, the Clear Creek Trail will run 21 miles from FM 521 on the west side of Pearland to Dixie Farm Road on the east. Finally, the Key Initiative includes recommendations to support the development and activation of the Pearland Transit Needs Assessment and Plan and continue local and collaborative efforts to improve stormwater management and drainage infrastructure.

WHY: Stakeholders said visible investments to infrastructure, streetscaping, sidewalks, stormwater and drainage infrastructure, and so on can help convey a sense of vibrancy and forward momentum to residential and commercial property owners and investors, thereby creating a more favorable environment for the type of development and quality of place enhancements envisioned in the preceding three Key Initiatives. Transportation and mobility are also themselves key components of a holistic approach to economic development. The ability for people and goods to move efficiently has a major influence on issues such as the “labor shed” from which businesses can draw talent and a community's competitiveness for certain types of site

location projects. New road connections drew significant praise from stakeholders during Phase 1 input; these enhanced connections were frequently cited as one of the most positive developments in the community in recent years. Stakeholders expressed a desire to complement progress on east-west connectivity with enhanced north-south routes. Input participants also expressed a strong desire to see the community continue to invest in trails, multi-use paths, and other active transportation investments along with drainage enhancements to ensure that the community is prepared for future rain events.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

D-1 Continue to support the long-term maintenance of Pearland's infrastructure

- With the City, PEDC, and other relevant partners, continue investments to maintain and/or update Pearland's existing drainage, streetscapes, sidewalks, and other relevant infrastructure to create a strong sense of "quality of place" and support related Key Initiatives (e.g., "Infill and Redevelopment")
- Work with all relevant partners to ensure that long-term maintenance costs are accounted for when pursuing infrastructure enhancements and upgrades, including the new investments proposed in the other Recommendations within this Key Initiative

D-2 Ensure the successful activation of the Broadway / FM 518 widening and reconstruction project

- Work with TxDOT and all relevant partners to advance the state-led FM 518 / Broadway project that will entail road reconstruction and widening, drainage, lighting, traffic signals
- Continue to work with property owners, businesses, and other stakeholders to mitigate temporary construction impacts

D-3 Advance the planning, design, and construction of priority road projects

- Advance local priority projects that enhance connectivity within Pearland, including (in no order):
 - The extension of Kingsley Drive from Clear Creek to Beltway 8
 - The extension of Reid Road (formerly Max Road) north to McHard Road
 - The extension of Pearland Parkway from Dixie Farm Road to the Galveston County line
 - The extension of Dixie Farm Road/CR 100 from SH 35 to FM 1128
 - Reconstructing Veterans Drive between Bailey Road and Broadway with a connection to Mykawa Road to the north

- Consistent with stakeholder input and the Multi-Modal Master Plan, emphasize the importance of sidewalks, safe crossings, and other active transportation infrastructure in roadway project

D-4 Continue to seek state and federal funding and other resources for transportation projects

- Continue to build and maintain excellent relationships with key elected and appointed officials; engage all relevant partners to identify and secure state and federal funds to advance priority road and highway projects in Pearland
- Ensure that messaging among community partners with public policy and/or advocacy agendas (e.g., the Chamber) is aligned so that Pearland “speaks with one voice” on issues of infrastructure
- Maintain ongoing dialogues with elected and appointed officials and other relevant partners in neighboring communities and throughout the Greater Houston region to explore possibilities to advance multi-jurisdictional transportation projects
- Engage a wide variety of community partners to create a multi-faceted campaign to educate and inform Pearland residents about the potential need to raise local funds to resource transportation projects

D-5 Seek to accelerate activation of the Multi-Modal Master Plan and Clear Creek Trail Master Plan

- Continue to work with the City of Pearland, PEDC, and other partners to activate the Multi-Modal and Clear Creek master plans
- Prioritize investments that provide safe access to parks and recreation amenities and potential future “places to gather” and mixed-use developments (see the “Places to Gather” Key Initiative)
- Consider opportunities for “trail-oriented development” and other opportunities to integrate bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure into private developments located in close proximity to a new or existing trail facility, particularly new and existing multifamily and compact residential uses (see Recommendation C-4)
- Develop measures to assess the fiscal impact of new trail facilities, sidewalks, and other active transportation infrastructure; examples could include impacts on nearby property values, sales tax revenue, etc.

COMPARATIVE EXAMPLE #2: Lafitte Greenway Guide to Trail-Oriented Development (New Orleans, LA)

D-6 Advance the development and activation of the Pearland Transit Needs Assessment and Plan

- Work with H-GAC and local partners to complete the strategic planning process and advance relevant recommendations to enhance transportation options in and around Pearland

D-7 Continue to advance infrastructure projects that improve drainage and stormwater management

- Continue to work collaboratively with all relevant public and private partners to plan, resource, and implement drainage improvement projects
- Continue to support the Clear Creek Federal Flood Damage Reduction Project led by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and with the involvement of the Harris County Flood Control District, Brazoria County Drainage District No. 4, the City of Pearland, and others
- Prioritize stormwater and drainage investments that can advance the preparation of commercial and industrial sites in priority areas for development and redevelopment

PARKS AND RECREATION

WHAT: Parks and recreation opportunities play an important role in a community's ability to attract and retain talented workers – and the companies that want to hire them. High-performing cities around the country have recognized this reality for many years, including Pearland as evidenced by the recognition of parks and recreation in its past two holistic economic development strategies. With more professionals working from home at least part of the time in the wake of the pandemic, having high-quality local opportunities for recreation has taken on added importance.

Stakeholders contacted during Phase 1 input praised the investments that Pearland has made into its parks in recent years, including upgrades to Independence Park, the installation of sports fields at the Hickory Slough Sportsplex, and the completion of the second phase of The Sports Complex at Shadow Creek Ranch. Another important development took place in January 2021 when the City adopted a strategic plan to guide activities in this area: the Parks Recreation, Open Spaces and Trail Master Plan. (A follow-on plan is anticipated in 2025.)

This Key Initiative is focused on continuing Pearland's momentum toward implementing Parks Recreation, Open Spaces and Trail Master Plan recommendations, ensuring that parks are appropriately resourced and staffed, and emphasizing opportunities to expand recreational sports fields – a key theme from stakeholder input. As implied by its name, the 2020 Parks Recreation, Open Spaces and Trail Master Plan overlaps to a degree with the Multi-Modal Master Plan's recommendations for trails and related bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. For the purposes of the Pearland Prosperity Update framework, trails and other mobility issues are addressed in the "Mobility and Infrastructure" Key Initiative.

Finally, stakeholder engagement revealed that Pearland counts on parks owned by homeowner associations (HOAs) and other private parties to achieve goals related to park land access. Input participants noted, however, that some HOAs have not adequately budgeted for the long-term maintenance of park facilities and the eventual replacement of park equipment and other amenities. Accordingly, the Key Initiative includes a recommendation to evaluate the feasibility of creating a low-cost loan or grant recapitalization program to assist HOAs with maintaining neighborhood park amenities.

WHY: Parks and recreational facilities play an important role in talent attraction and retention. Stakeholders in Pearland have long understood that the community contains relatively little public park acreage relative to other in-demand suburbs around the country. According to the 2022 City of Pearland's Benchmark Cities Study,

Pearland had 458 acres of parks as of 2021. This accounted for approximately 1.5 percent of the city's total land area, which placed Pearland last among a set of 11 communities. The report noted that there are numerous privately owned parks and green spaces within Pearland's neighborhoods as well as regional parks (such as Tom Bass Park) just outside of the city limits. Stakeholders further noted that with both privately and publicly owned parks included, Pearland is able to meet the National Parks and Recreation Association (NPRA) standard of ensuring that all residents are within a 10-minute walk of a park. That said, stakeholders in Pearland expressed a clear desire to continue investing in parks and recreation, including upgrades to existing facilities, long-term expansion of public park acreage, and ensuring consistent funding for operations and maintenance.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

E-1 Continue to implement the Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan

- Work with the City of Pearland, its Parks Department, and other key stakeholders to activate "Primary Improvement Priorities" in the Pearland Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan, including the existing plan (which dates from 2021) and an anticipated 2025 update
- Based on stakeholder feedback in the Pearland Prosperity Update process, seek opportunities to expand sports fields (see Recommendation E-3), "leisure areas" for unprogrammed outdoor recreation, and safe pedestrian access to parks facilities (see Recommendation D-5)
- Advance recommendations to create a long-range parkland acquisition program to enhance the supply and equitable distribution of parkland within Pearland
- Seek opportunities "signature" parks and amenities with the potential to improve Pearland's ability to retain and attract talent
- Work with public and private partners to educate and inform key stakeholders and the general public on the need for parks and recreation amenities and their connection to the community's ability to attract jobs and investment; include key metrics such as percentage of land area devoted to parks relative to comparison communities

E-2 Ensure that Pearland's parks have sufficient resources and staff

- As recommended in the Master Plan, ensure that the Parks Department is "fully equipped with the resources it needs to effectively operate and maintain" parks and related facilities and programs; ensure that the Parks department is adequately staffed to carry out its core functions and advance the goals of the Master Plan

- Seek sustainable public funding streams to support park operations (in addition to capital improvements); explore opportunities to pursue alternative revenue streams such as naming rights for parks and trails to supplement public funds
- Develop measures to assess the fiscal impact of new investments in park facilities; examples could include impacts on nearby property values, sales tax revenue, etc.

E-3 Seek to expand Pearland's sports fields and ensure equitable distribution across the community

- Seek opportunities to expand Pearland's supply of sports fields citywide, particularly on the east side of the community
- Advance plans to build additional sports fields, including turf soccer fields, at Hickory Slough Park
- Work with the Parks Department, CVB, and others to balance opportunities to attract visitors through youth sports tournaments and similar events with resident needs; commission a small-scale study to determine whether Pearland is receiving fair market value for tournament field rentals

E-4 Evaluate tools to ensure the long-term sustainability of privately owned park facilities

- With Parks & Recreation and other key stakeholders, assess the number and condition of privately owned park facilities in Pearland; this work could be accomplished as part of a future update to the Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan
- Evaluate the feasibility of creating a privately resourced "recapitalization fund" to assist HOAs with capital improvements for privately owned park facilities
- Evaluate the feasibility of leveraging Parks & Recreation staff expertise to provide technical assistance to HOAs seeking to maintain, refurbish, and/or upgrade privately owned parks

CULTURAL ARTS

WHAT: When talented individuals are evaluating a community as a place to live, key considerations typically include proximity to employment, cost and availability of housing, quality of schools, public safety, and so on. With workforce becoming the primary competitive issue for economic development, in-demand talent has become more selective about the assets they are seeking in a community of choice. Quality of place and quality of life amenities like arts and cultural spaces, facilities, events, and unique, walkable destination districts have therefore emerged as critical competitive criteria for places of all sizes.

Pearland's arts and culture sector currently features a number of events and organizations. For instance, Pearland Art on the Pavilion is an annual two-day juried art show presented by the Pearland Convention and Visitors Bureau that highlights handmade work from artisans across various mediums and skillsets. The CVB also oversees the PearScape Trail, a cultural tourism attraction located across the city featuring four-foot-high fiberglass "pears" painted by local artists. Input participants acknowledge, however, that more must be done to keep pace with other communities in Greater Houston and elsewhere.

This Key Initiative seeks to leverage Pearland's existing cultural arts assets while expanding capacity to satisfy the demands of current and future residents. This will entail supporting the development and implementation of the Cultural Arts Master Plan currently under development in order to expand awareness and support for the arts. Additional activities could include establishing a "sense of place" across the city through new and existing events and public art and evaluating the feasibility of creating a branded cultural district in Pearland for the benefit of residents and visitors alike.

WHY: As Pearland seeks to cement its status as a community of choice, arts and culture is becoming a more prominent issue for residents. Compared to stakeholder input themes from the previous two Pearland Prosperity processes, arts and culture amenities and capacity was a common discussion point for public and private leaders and the broader community. Stakeholders feel that Pearland's status as a community of choice will not be sustainable without a strong arts sector. It is also a way to differentiate Pearland from peer communities in the eyes of current and potential residents.

These findings echo key issues identified in the research phase of the City of Pearland's Cultural Arts Master Plan, scheduled to be considered by City Council in spring 2024. The process is being shepherded by the Pearland Convention and Visitors Bureau on behalf of the city. The objectives of the Cultural Arts Master Plan – the first

in the city's history – are to establish a shared communitywide vision for the arts, positively impact the local tourism economy, and enhance the city's quality of life and quality of place.

Preliminary observations from the project's planning team highlighted both the positives of the local arts scene, especially the fact that events are generally well attended, as well as challenges like a shortage of performance and exhibit spaces, a need for more youth and family-oriented activities, and a desire for a space where the entire community can gather. While the planning team found that residents want more arts and cultural offerings across the board in Pearland, it stressed that recommended new capacity must reflect the realities of potential funding.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

F-1 Support the implementation of the City of Pearland's approved Cultural Arts Master Plan

- Partner with the city, local arts organizations, the CVB, the Chamber, and other entities to ensure priority initiatives of the Master Plan are advanced
- Identify and pursue viable opportunities to source funding to support Master Plan implementation
- Pursue enhanced "internal marketing" capabilities to promote arts and cultural offerings to Pearland's residents; seek opportunities to create synergies between internal messaging and "external" marketing activities carried out by the CVB
- Consider conducting inter-city visits to best-practice cultural arts destination cities to inform local implementation efforts

F-2 Assess local support for establishing a branded cultural arts district in Pearland

- Research comparative examples in peer communities to determine the design, function, and parameters for Pearland's potential district
- Work with partners in alignment with Pearland's Cultural Arts Master Plan to explore the opportunity to incorporate a cultural arts district into plan implementation
- Determine the viability of designating Old Town as the preferred location for the cultural arts district
- Leverage the potential cultural arts district as a hub for Pearland's creative economy

F-3 Continue efforts to create a “sense of place” in Pearland activity districts and public spaces

- Advance Cultural Arts Master Plan components leveraging placemaking to create interest in key Pearland activity nodes
- Consider expansion of the PearScape Trail and seek opportunities to activate trail sites through creative programming and events; connect to the broader buildout of trails in Pearland (see Recommendation D-5)
- Explore models like Build a Better Block to execute targeted, inexpensive, community-driven efforts to transform underused spaces into quality of place assets
- Research potential models to create a flexible Cultural Arts Fund to resource small cultural arts projects proposed by Pearland residents

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

WHAT: Stakeholders in Pearland understand that there are numerous factors that influence the community's competitiveness – talent availability, quality of life, and so on. Accordingly, the Pearland Prosperity initiative embraces a holistic approach to economic development. But even in this context, activities such as business attraction and marketing and business retention and expansion (BRE) are still vital to overall success.

For nearly 30 years, the Pearland Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) has worked proactively to attract new primary jobs and capital investment to Pearland. According to its website, the PEDC has helped bring 5,400 jobs and \$1 billion in private capital investment to Pearland through activities such as marketing, relationship building, project management, project support and the provision of incentives. A major focus of this Key Initiative is to continue these “core” business attraction and marketing efforts. One specific opportunity that emerged from stakeholder input is Pearland's potential to make further headway into the biotechnology and medical manufacturing business sectors. Input participants noted recent economic development “wins” including the rapid growth of Lonza and the attraction of firms such as Healgen Scientific and Millar, Inc. Stakeholders said they would like to see the community proactively pursue additional headquarter operations, research and development functions, and manufacturing facilities in these fields.

Another key component of this Key Initiative is continuing BizConnect, the community's successful business retention and expansion (BRE) program. Nearly all best-practice economic development programs incorporate formal BRE initiatives that regularly engage major employers through site visits and other regular communications to identify and respond to needs and challenges at both the firm and community level. In Pearland, these activities are carried out through BizConnect, a joint effort of the PEDC and the Chamber. According to the PEDC, the program engaged nearly 50 employers in Pearland in fiscal year 2022, and stakeholders contacted during Phase 1 research held generally positive views of the effort.

In addition to “external” marketing efforts to position Pearland as a destination for jobs and investment, the previous Pearland Prosperity plan also included an “internal” marketing recommendation aimed at conveying the importance of a holistic economic development program to local community. Phase 1 input participants praised the PEDC's overall approach to communications but said there is both a need and opportunity to expand internal communications efforts to reach a broader range of stakeholders.

Finally, while the PEDC's core aim is to grow “primary” jobs in business sectors that export goods and services

to other markets, the organization has also recognized the important role that the retail sector – and the sales taxes it generates – play in Pearland’s overall fiscal and economic health. Consistent with a recommendation in the previous Pearland Prosperity Plan, the PEDC commissioned a Retail Analysis that was completed in 2022. The report includes concrete recommendations for PEDC and its partners to pursue to support a more vibrant local retail sector and enhance Pearland’s quality of place.

WHY: The core aim of a holistic economic development initiative is to raise standards of living and improve quality of life for current and future residents. For most individuals, these issues are tied to the type of high-quality employment opportunities that the PEDC and its partners are seeking to grow in Pearland. Attracting a wide range of primary jobs offers numerous other benefits, including growing and diversifying the community’s property tax base and making the local economy more resilient to downturns that impact a specific business sector. While a successful business attraction program can generate significant amounts of attention and excitement, research suggests that in most communities, job growth is driven primarily by incumbent businesses and new startups. The BizConnect program has a strong track record of success and received praise from stakeholders.

Additionally, Phase 1 quantitative research revealed that while the jobs based in Pearland are largely in sectors such as health care, retail, and hospitality, its resident workforce is highly educated, with strong concentrations of workers in fields such as engineering and information technology. Attracting a broader range of jobs to Pearland can provide its talented residents with opportunities to work close to home, which appeals to both employees by cutting down on commute times and employers by making it easier to retain these individuals. (The initial success of the “Work in Pearland” jobs portal launched by the Chamber and the PEDC is a testament to the interest in such local employment opportunities.)

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

G-1 Continue “core” business attraction and marketing initiatives to grow primary jobs

- Continue to position the PEDC as the primary point of contact for managing economic development projects throughout their lifecycle and, if needed, through post-project assistance
- Through the PEDC, continue to build and maintain strong relationships with all relevant economic development partners, including site selectors, state agencies and “upstream” lead generation entities, regional and sub-regional partners, industry and real estate trade groups, and brokers

G-2 Enhance targeted marketing efforts for the biotechnology and medical manufacturing sectors

- Continue to position the Lower Kirby District as a destination for headquarter operations, research and development activities, and/or manufacturing facilities connected to the biotechnology and medical manufacturing sectors
- Seek opportunities to enhance Pearland's profile within biotechnology and medical manufacturing through targeted communications, attendance at high-value industry events and meetings, and other outbound marketing activities (e.g., participating in state-led site selector events)
- Prepare customized digital marketing materials highlighting Pearland's value proposition for these sectors; work with existing biotechnology and medical firms to highlight "success stories"
- Continue to leverage workforce development staff capacity and collaborate with PK-12 and higher education partners to enhance training programs that support biotechnology and medical manufacturing (see Key Initiative I-Workforce Development)

G-3 Continue to engage Pearland's primary employers through the BizConnect program

- Continue to conduct regular on-site interviews with key local employers through the BizConnect program; leverage findings to identify key opportunities and challenges and work with all relevant partners to develop responses to business- and community-level needs
- Continue to complement economic development marketing and business attraction activities by seeking to identify opportunities for business expansions and/or locations through BRE efforts; continue to enlist executives and other key representatives from existing businesses to support business attraction efforts (e.g., assistance during site visits)

G-4 Expand "internal communications" capabilities to reach a broader range of Pearland stakeholders

- Continue current internal communications efforts to convey progress on economic development activities and the implementation of Pearland Prosperity, including implementation tracking, quarterly newsletters, social media, earned media (when relevant), and regular communications with City of Pearland elected officials and staff
- Work with partners including the Pearland Chamber, the City of Pearland and its agencies, and others to develop outreach techniques that "meet people where they are" such as annual or semi-annual updates at HOAs and community group meetings, information tables at festivals and other major

community events, and so on

- Leverage expanded internal communications capacity to promote initiatives such as Work in Pearland and other “resident-facing” opportunities
- Continue to utilize HubSpot software to track open rates and other key metrics for email marketing

G-5 Implement recommendations from the 2022 Pearland Retail Analysis

- Implement key recommendations from the 2022 Pearland Retail Analysis; ensure that sufficient staff capacity and resources are allocated through the PEDC to effectively advance efforts
- Per the Retail Analysis, cultivate relationships with developers, investors, brokers, and other retail industry stakeholders to aggressively recruit new retail opportunities and tenants
- Develop a multi-channel marketing effort to promote Pearland as a general destination for retail development, retail entrepreneurs, and customers
- Connect retail recruitment efforts to create dynamic gathering places in Pearland (see the “Places to Gather” Key Initiative); per the recommendations in the Retail Analysis, create and administer incentives for small businesses locating in the Old Town (see the “Old Town Revitalization” Key Initiative)
- Ensure that sufficient staff capacity is in place to advance strategic recommendations; responsibilities could overlap with the proposed staff position to guide Old Town revitalization efforts (see Recommendation B-5)

PEARLAND INNOVATION HUB

WHAT: One of the seven Focus Areas in the previous Pearland Prosperity strategy was “Business Formation & Early-Stage Growth,” which focused on supporting entrepreneurs and startups in Pearland. Its key recommendation was establishing a local “hub” for entrepreneurship to enhance local services and connect to Greater Houston’s large and well-established entrepreneurial ecosystem.

After completing a feasibility study and request for qualifications process, partners in Pearland selected Houston-based The Cannon as the community’s partner for creating the Pearland Innovation Hub (PIH) in November 2021. A Hub Navigator (equivalent to an executive director) was hired in April 2022 and the PIH was formally launched in May 2022. Stakeholders noted that like the nascent firms it serves, PIH is itself still a “startup” finding its footing in Pearland and the broader regional landscape. (The organization is currently in the process of becoming a 501(c)3 nonprofit). This Key Initiative is dedicated to ensuring that the Pearland Innovation Hub realizes its potential as the centerpiece of a thriving local entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The timing of the Pearland Prosperity Update is fortuitous with respect to PIH. The 2021 feasibility study recommended a “virtual” hub concept due to a lack of near-term demand for a physical entrepreneurship facility in Pearland, and PIH’s Hub Navigator had been officed at the Chamber for the first year-plus of the entity’s existence. In the fall of 2023, however, PIH relocated to Spacio.us, a co-working community located on Broadway Bend Drive near the Pearland Town Center. Positioning PIH’s presence at Spacio.us as the physical “focal point” for entrepreneurship has the potential to provide a major boost to the PIH model and the overall entrepreneurial ecosystem in Pearland.

From a programming perspective, stakeholders said PIH has so far focused on the Pro-Active Coaching Program, which provides free mentoring and coaching services to entrepreneurs and businesses across the growth-stage spectrum, and other events for entrepreneurs. This Key Initiative proposes continuing the coaching program with enhanced recruiting efforts and an adjusted scope to ensure that it is well-utilized and appropriately scaled for Pearland’s needs. It also recommends increasing the emphasis on events capable of increasing the visibility of both entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial services and facilitating connections to professional services and other ecosystem resources that can help startups succeed.

Finally, while PIH is set up to assist entrepreneurs and startups regardless of business sector, there is a specific opportunity to enhance Pearland’s quality of place and celebrate the community’s cultural diversity by

supporting new retail and hospitality businesses. Such activities would connect to and support efforts to create vibrant gathering places and support redevelopment in Old Town.

WHY: Business attraction and BRE are two of the three ways in which communities can directly pursue job growth. The third is providing support for entrepreneurs and encouraging new business formation. Stakeholders contacted during Phase 1 input said all three methods remain a community priority and should be reflected in the Pearland Prosperity Update. As discussed in the previous Pearland Prosperity strategy, Pearland has several advantages that can support entrepreneurial activity, namely a highly educated and diverse resident population and an increasing number of innovation-focused businesses. Unlike prior strategic planning processes, however, Pearland now has dedicated organizational capacity to advance entrepreneurial initiatives in the form of the PIH. Input participants said they would like to see PIH continue to evolve its programming to serve existing and prospective entrepreneurs in Pearland and complement the many well-established entrepreneurial ecosystem resources in the Greater Houston region.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

H-1 **Position the Pearland Innovation Hub's location at Spacio.us as the service delivery "focal point"**

- Through programs, events, and communications activities, ensure that the PIH presence at Spacio.us is the focal point for Pearland's entrepreneurial ecosystem
- Launch a multi-faceted marketing campaign utilizing digital media advertising, social media, attendance at off-site events, and word-of-mouth marketing to ensure that current and prospective entrepreneurs in Pearland are aware of the facility and its offerings; establish clear messaging to avoid communicating between the two brands such as: "The Pearland Innovation Hub at Spacio.us"
- Work with the Spacio.us staff to identify co-working clients who could benefit from coaching services and vice versa
- Conduct regular events for entrepreneurs at the facility to cement its status as Pearland's physical entrepreneurial "center of gravity" (see Recommendation H-3)

H-2 Right-size the Pro-Active Coaching Program and enhance efforts to identify coaches and members

- With the Hub Navigator and PIH Advisory Board, adjust goals related to member and coach participation in the Pro-Active Coaching Program to be commensurate with observed local demand; leave open the possibility of scaling the program back up if necessary
- Increase efforts to recruit coaches and members into the program; work with ecosystem partners such as the San Jacinto College Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and non-traditional partners such as neighborhood homeowner's associations, faith-based organizations, and community groups to identify new candidates
- With the Advisory Board and Hub Navigator, regularly evaluate and adjust performance metrics and targets to find the right mix of offerings for the Pearland Innovation Hub
- Leverage the awareness campaign proposed in Recommendation H-1 to drive new sign-ups

H-3 Increase networking opportunities and special events for Pearland's entrepreneurs

- Task PIH staff, volunteers, and supportive partners with increasing the number of networking opportunities and special events for entrepreneurs in Pearland; events could include business plan competitions, hackathons, "reverse pitch" presentations, learning opportunities, social events such as happy hours, and so on
- Recruit Greater Houston ecosystem partners to attend, facilitate, or co-sponsor events in Pearland

H-4 Connect entrepreneurs to professional services and other regional ecosystem resources

- Continue to leverage The Cannon's locally based staff and extensive networks connections in Greater Houston to connect Pearland entrepreneurs to established regional entrepreneurial ecosystem resources
- Engage external partners including the SBDC and other relevant organizations to complement services available through PIH
- Work with the Pearland Chamber of Commerce, professional associations, and others to identify professional service providers (e.g., law firms, accounting firms, etc.) in and around Pearland that specialize in serving startups and/or small businesses; leverage PIH staff capacity to make referrals to these professional services providers
- Work with The Cannon leadership and the PIH Advisory Board to evaluate the feasibility and desirability

of offering a reduced-cost “bundle” of professional services (e.g., legal, accounting, etc.) as a PIH membership benefit

H-5 Support diverse retail and hospitality startups that enhance Pearland’s quality of place

- Work with the Hub Navigator, retail and hospitality stakeholders, and other key partners such as the Chamber to identify entrepreneurs interested in starting a business that can enhance quality of place; proactively recruit entrepreneurs who reflect Pearland’s racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity
- Enroll prospective entrepreneurs in the Pro-Active Coaching Program and seek coaches with retail and hospitality experience to provide mentoring services
- Evaluate the potential to identify program participants through a special event such as a retail- and hospitality-focused business plan pitch competition
- Connect these efforts to quality of place efforts described in the first two Key Initiatives

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

WHAT: Pearland is a highly educated community that boasts excellent PK-12 public schools and proximity to numerous higher education institutions. In order to support economic growth and enhance opportunities for current and future residents, the previous Pearland Prosperity strategy identified a need to “better connect aspects of the local talent pipeline and ensure that Pearland’s business community is well-networked with education and training providers.”

Partners in Pearland have since made significant progress to that end. In 2021, partners including the PEDC and the Chamber’s Workforce Development Committee approved the Pearland Workforce Strategy Action Plan, which includes a set of goals to guide the community’s workforce and talent development efforts. The PEDC and the Chamber have also devoted staff capacity in this area. The PEDC hired a full-time Workforce Director in April 2022, and the Chamber designated a portion of its Vice President’s time to talent and workforce development issues. Stakeholders said there is now an opportunity to leverage this new staff and organizational capacity – and the connections and relationships that have been formed as a result – as a “platform” to take on a more ambitious program of work with respect to workforce development.

Part of this Key Initiative will entail continuing successful ongoing efforts and initiatives. PEDC’s Workforce Director has built relationships with a wide variety of regional stakeholders and has worked directly with employers to identify and address workforce needs. Stakeholders said this work has led to numerous successful outcomes, including the development of a partnership between the PEDC, Alvin Community College, and Lonza to create a biotechnology certificate program. Input participants also identified the Work in Pearland campaign and website as a successful initiative with further potential to help Pearland’s employers find talent and expand opportunities for residents to work close to home. This Key Initiative will also entail activating key recommendations from the Workforce Strategy Action Plan including the creation of a community resource network (CRN) that inventories regional education, training, and workforce partners and supportive “wraparound” services that can help address challenges related to child care, transportation, youth disconnection, etc. that impact an individual’s ability to get and keep a job.

Stakeholders also identified several “next-level” opportunities for workforce development. These include creating a formal partnership framework through which Pearland’s businesses and education and training providers can collaborate to advance talent pipeline improvements. This work should include the development of a set of Career Pathways, which are a “series of structured and connected education programs and support services

that enable students, often while they are working, to advance over time to better jobs and higher levels of education and training.” Best-practice Career Pathways identify “stackable” credentials, where each step on the pathway can build on the previous and prepare individuals to progress to the next level of employment and/or education. Finally, the Key Initiative recommends pursuing additional opportunities for physical spaces that can enhance training capacity within Pearland and drive additional value for a wide range of partners.

WHY: Talent is the most important factor for driving economic success. Pearland’s existing residents are highly educated and skilled, and the community is served by highly regarded education and training providers, including but not limited to the Alvin ISD, Pearland ISD, Alvin Community College, San Jacinto Community College, and the University of Houston–Clear Lake at Pearland. This Key Initiative is focused on ensuring that these talent pipeline partners are connected to and aligned with Pearland’s business community to support economic growth and increased opportunities for residents to thrive.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

I-1 Continue to provide Pearland’s employers with customized workforce assistance

- Through the PEDC’s Workforce Director and in cooperation with partner organizations, continue to work directly with Pearland employers to develop solutions to specific workforce needs
- Continue to utilize the BizConnect program to identify Pearland firms that would benefit from customized workforce assistance; analyze findings to uncover larger competitive issues with respect to workforce development that may benefit from a systems-level approach

I-2 Develop and promote a community resource network (CRN)

- As proposed in the Pearland Workforce Strategy Action Plan, develop an asset inventory of regional training programs, supportive services, and workforce ecosystem partners
- Ensure that the inventory includes government agencies, nonprofits, social services providers, and other community resources that assist individuals with a range of issues that might otherwise be barriers to workforce participation and finding and/or holding a job; include providers that serve all or part of Pearland’s “labor shed, i.e., areas within a 45-minute drive of the city from which local employers are likely to seek talent
- Consider engaging an external partner such as United Way organization(s) to assist with the development of the asset inventory

- Consistent with the recommendations in the Workforce Strategy Action Plan, conduct a campaign to support the implementation of the asset inventory; leverage the BizConnect program and relationships with potential partners such as Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast to introduce the inventory to businesses and front-line staff; evaluate the feasibility of leveraging OpenCounter or a similar tool (see Recommendation C-1) to direct Pearland businesses to the inventory

COMPARATIVE EXAMPLE #3: Community Asset Map (Montgomery County, MD)

I-3 Establish a formal partnership framework connecting business and education

- Create a formal framework to connect Pearland's businesses with the PK-12, higher education, and workforce development partners that serve the community to ensure that education and training programs are aligned with employer demand
- Work with stakeholders to confirm the Pearland Chamber of Commerce as the appropriate entity to house the formal partnership framework
- Design the partnership framework as invitation-only "working group" tasked with identifying opportunities, challenges, and potential solutions for professional staff to pursue; consider pivoting the Chamber's Workforce Development Committee to function as this "working group," with regular meetings to advance the implementation of new and enhanced Career Pathways (see Recommendation I-4) and other strategic priorities
- Ensure that the partnership framework functions as a "two-way street" where both businesses and education and training partners are active participants and beneficiaries
- Continue to offer existing Workforce Development Committee programs such as learning and networking opportunities on an "open invitation" basis as desired
- Leverage PEDC staff capacity to connect businesses directly to college advisory boards to guide existing training programs and identify potential new training programs to develop
- Encourage participation and buy-in from key business executives, HR professionals, and community outreach liaisons and key decision-makers from education and training partners; ensure that membership and/or investment in the Chamber and PEDC are not required to participate in the formal partnership framework
- Work with all relevant stakeholders to ensure potential industry sector partnerships in manufacturing and/or life sciences are not duplicative with the formal partnership framework

COMPARATIVE EXAMPLE #4: CareerEdge Funders Collaborative (Sarasota, FL)

COMPARATIVE EXAMPLE #5: Talent Action Collaborative (Baton Rouge, LA)

I-4 Create formal Career Pathways to create opportunities for residents and support key sectors

- Through the Workforce Development Committee and with the support of PEDC staff, confirm an initial set of Career Pathways on which to focus; begin by evaluating three verticals: manufacturing, health care, and biotechnology and medical device manufacturing
- Work with all stakeholders to identify “ladders” of occupations within each confirmed Pathway and create sequences of “stackable” credentials including certificates, degrees, and other awards that map onto the education and skills that these occupations require
- Through the Workforce Development Committee, work with education and training providers to ensure that existing curriculums and programs are aligned with Career Pathway needs; identify program gaps and work with stakeholders to pursue resources to establish new programs as needed
- Consistent with Strategy 2.3 in the Workforce Strategy Action Plan, work with employers and local ISDs to develop internships and other work-based learning opportunities for high school students aligned with Career Pathways
- Leverage regular Workforce Development Committee meetings to evaluate Career Pathway performance and make needed adjustments
- Work with the Chamber, ISDs, workforce development partners, and other stakeholders to promote Career Pathways to students, parents, businesses, and others

COMPARATIVE EXAMPLE #6: OC Pathways (Orange County, CA)

I-5 Continue to support the Work in Pearland initiative and online portal

- Continue to maintain and enhance the Work in Pearland online jobs portal; seek additional opportunities to promote the initiative to businesses and residents to increase utilization

I-6 Pursue the development of physical training spaces in and around Pearland

- Work with higher education partners to identify opportunities for enhancing physical training spaces at college campuses in or around Pearland, particularly in in-demand fields such as biotechnology; work with all relevant stakeholders to pursue potential funding for new and/or upgraded facilities

DIVERSE TALENT

WHAT: The United States is rapidly becoming a more racially and ethnically diverse place. By 2060, the U.S. Census Bureau projects the nation's non-Hispanic White population will decrease by 10 percent compared to a 94 percent rise in the Hispanic population (who will represent nearly 30 percent of U.S. residents).

The City of Pearland is well ahead of the nation in terms of population diversity. According to the 2022 City of Pearland's Benchmark Cities Study, Pearland had the highest "diversity index" among an 11-city peer set as of the 2020 Census. The city has significant representation from the country's four largest racial and ethnic groups: Hispanic or Latino, White, Black, and Asian. Of the 632 Census places (cities, towns, etc.) with at least 65,000 residents, Pearland was one of just 33 communities with at least 10 percent of its population in each of these groups. In a national index developed by retailer Filterbuy, Pearland ranked as America's most diverse small city (between 100,000 and 149,999 residents) based on 2021 Census estimates, edging out the next most-diverse city, Vallejo, California.

The 2020 Pearland Prosperity plan recognized the opportunity to strategically leverage the city's diversity through a set of key potential actions, including forming a Diversity Business Council. In response, the Pearland Chamber empaneled a diverse stakeholder discussion group and partnered with PEDC to host the "Knowledge Series" – learning sessions focused on diverse business practices and inclusive leadership.

Leaders feel that diversity programming should be continued through the Pearland Prosperity Update, but with a more focused and systematic approach that acknowledges issues of race and ethnicity but also recognizes diversities of education, age, income, and other determinants. The Knowledge Series could be complemented by a focus on attracting and welcoming diverse residents to Pearland and launching networking events to better connect the city's diverse population groups. While some of these activities will obviously help make Pearland more of a community of choice for diverse residents, these efforts are included here given their importance to the community's diverse talent pool that businesses increasingly desire.

WHY: As America diversifies – especially among younger generations – and talent continues to express preferences for communities that are diverse, inclusive, and welcoming, business organizations are increasingly seeing the economic benefits of diversity-focused programming. As Chamber Executive magazine reported, "What has been traditionally seen as a sort of moral issue – inclusion – has become a central concern for economists seeking to promote prosperity ... Regions that are more equal and more integrated – across income,

race, gender and place – have better economic performance, on average, than those regions that are more unequal and more divided.”

The non-profit workforce and education advocacy organization JFF aggregated selected research on the economic impacts of diversity and inclusion into a paper called, “Inclusive Economic Development: Good for Growth and Good for Communities.” Multiple findings concluded that economically healthy cities are more inclusive than distressed ones. Studies also found that economic exclusion is harmful to the economy, resulting in lost economic output and lost earnings and necessitating costly poverty alleviation measures. As cited earlier, Pearland has already received positive national press for its resident diversity and can further differentiate itself by highlighting how diverse newcomers are welcomed and networked in the community.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

J-1 Sustain and enhance the Pearland Chamber of Commerce’s diversity initiatives

- Continue efforts to expand the Knowledge Series to include programming reflecting a more broad-based definition of diversity; outreach to businesses to increase Knowledge Series attendance and identify topics with strong resonance to local employers
- Consider formally recognizing and leveraging the Chamber’s diversity leadership group as a catalyst for expanding local understanding of diversity and inclusion issues and their economic impact

COMPARATIVE EXAMPLE #7: Cincinnati (OH) Regional Chamber Diversity & Inclusion initiatives

J-2 Enhance the Work in Pearland platform to attract diverse talent to Pearland

- Work with partners and diverse Pearland leaders to develop and cultivate a brand and messaging for Pearland’s talent diversity assets; utilize the brand to design and launch an update to the Work in Pearland website and campaign to highlight Pearland as a diverse, inclusive community
- Ensure that the updated site includes information on how to access services and opportunities in Pearland and contact information for supportive organizations and diverse talent ambassadors
- Leverage existing marketing platforms to promote the portal externally

COMPARATIVE EXAMPLE #8: Ask a Local (Omaha, NE)

J-3 Expand networking opportunities for diverse Pearland residents

- Host twice-yearly receptions affiliated with Pearland's diversity brand as a platform for diverse local talent to meet, network, and build community
- Support leaders of the Pearland Chamber's Young Professionals group to incorporate designated diversity programming and events into its regular activities

COMPARATIVE EXAMPLE #9: Multicultural Receptions (Des Moines, IA)

SITE DEVELOPMENT

WHAT: The availability of “shovel-ready” development sites is an important factor in a community’s ability to attract and retain jobs. This is especially true for competitive economic development “projects” that typically require suitable land that is ready for acquisition and development on a tight timeframe. This Key Initiative is focused on ensuring that Pearland grows a strong inventory of shovel-ready development sites served by high-quality infrastructure and desirable amenities.

The previous Pearland Prosperity plan included a Focus Area dedicated to “Site Development” that had three main recommendations:

- Position the Lower Kirby District and the SH 35 Corridor as priority areas for development
- Proactively assemble and prepare sites to eliminate burdens related to acquisition and development
- Ensure that best-in-class infrastructure and amenities are in place to support site development

The PEDC and its partners have made significant progress in each of these areas in recent years. It has pursued numerous development agreements in the SH 35 corridor and worked with the Lower Kirby and Pearland #1 Management Districts to implement improvements that make the area more attractive for development. In 2021, the PEDC engaged Marc Darcy Partners to identify locations with high development potential in the Lower Kirby and SH35 North and South Business Parks, and the organization and its partners are continuing to pursue opportunities to activate these sites. The PEDC has also helped fund numerous upgrades to stormwater detention systems, roads, and streetscapes in these areas.

Input participants praised the aforementioned progress but noted that there is still much work ongoing in these areas. Stakeholders also noted that Pearland’s priorities around business site and infrastructure development are largely the same now as they were in late 2019 and early 2020. Accordingly, this Key Initiative is comprised of the same recommendations as the “Site Development” Focus Area in the previous Pearland Prosperity strategy, with some minor revisions in tactical detail.

WHY: Maintaining an inventory of suitable industrial and commercial sites is a prerequisite for most competitive economic development projects that create new jobs and private capital investment. While Pearland currently has multiple such sites, stakeholders understand that the supply of readily developable land is limited. If Pearland is to “remain in the game” for many future economic development projects, it will need to proactively seek to prepare additional sites. Stakeholders noted, however, that many of the community’s most promising sites

face barriers to development such as fractured ownership or environmental concerns that would make them challenging to assemble and/or prepare for prospective end-users working on a tight timeline. Accordingly, some public sector involvement will likely be required to activate these sites. It should be emphasized that stakeholders do not wish to see the PEDC or other government entity act as a primary developer. Instead, leaders said the PEDC should continue to utilize development agreements with highly qualified private-sector partners to move worthy projects forward.

Stakeholders also said that the master planning and community branding work that has gone into Lower Kirby has been a major factor in attracting firms to the area, as it offers a differentiated presentation and “feel” relative to competition in nearby unincorporated areas. Input participants said it will be important to ensure that existing and new sites are served by necessary infrastructure and enhanced with supportive amenities and “curb appeal.”

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

K-1 Continue to position the Lower Kirby District and SH 35 as priority areas for development

- Continue to market the Lower Kirby District and the SH 35 North and South Business Parks as destinations for development in Pearland; when possible, seek opportunities for public-private partnerships to further development in these areas
- Implement recommendations in the Lower Kirby Urban Center Master Plan and the SH 35 Corridor Redevelopment Plan that increase the competitiveness of these areas for development

K-2 Continue to proactively assemble and prepare development sites

- Based on recommendations in the Site Evaluation Analysis reports prepared by Marsh Darcy Partners and evolving market knowledge, proactively pursue the development of new sites
- Leverage PEDC resources and pursue public-private development agreements to acquire and assemble sites that enhance Pearland’s competitive position for primary jobs
- Proactively market new shovel-ready sites through the PEDC

K-3 Continue to ensure that sites are supported by best-in-class infrastructure and amenities

- Continue to leverage the PEDC and other resources to ensure that development sites are well-served by required infrastructure; continue to ensure that entrances to development sites are attractive, well-maintained, and effectively branded
- Continue to implement recommendations in the Lower Kirby Urban Center Master Plan and the SH 35 Corridor Redevelopment Plan related to beautification and amenity development
- Continue to pursue park and trail amenities proximate to development sites to create an additional “selling point” for the properties

APPENDIX A: COMPARATIVE EXAMPLES

The following projects, programs, and initiatives are profiled to enable Pearland Prosperity Update implementation partners to explore example efforts related to the strategy's Recommendations. These examples are not intended to represent the best practices in these spheres (although some may be considered as such) but rather opportunities to highlight processes and outcomes that can inform implementation activities.

#1: REV BIRMINGHAM (BIRMINGHAM, AL)

revbirmingham.org

From identifying sites to facilitating incentives to retail leasing assistance, REV helps developers with projects in Birmingham's downtown and select neighborhoods across the city. REV's Design & Development Team works with investors, developers, and businesses interested in developing or redeveloping a property navigate the process and better understand the context of their project within the market and the community. REV helps development teams with market data research, site identification, due diligence assistance, permitting and regulatory assistance, and connections to financing and incentives.

#2: LAFITTE GREENWAY GUIDE TO TRAIL-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (NEW ORLEANS, LA)

lafittegreenway.org/trod

The Lafitte Greenway Guide to Trail-Oriented Development provides a comprehensive set of planning and design principles for new development along the Lafitte Greenway. The principles outlined in the report were built on and codified in the City of New Orleans Master Plan for the 21st Century, Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, Lafitte Greenway Master Plan, and Lafitte Corridor Revitalization Plan. Developers, city officials, and community members are encouraged to use the guide in combination with these public documents to ensure successful and responsible development.

#3: COMMUNITY ASSET MAP (MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD)

worksourcemontgomery.com/community-asset-map

WorkSource Montgomery (WSM) is the public agency leveraging federal dollars to provide employment

services for Montgomery County, Maryland. Working with local partners, WSM developed a digital resource that serves as a regional adult services community asset map to capitalize on the existing resources already available within Montgomery County. The agency identified and confirmed 111 organizations and 293 adult services across Montgomery County for inclusion in an online geocator Community Asset Map. Job seekers can search the map by category and see program summaries and information for accessing services or contacting organizational representatives. Potential partners also have the opportunity to fill out a form to be added to the asset map. The map is hoped to serve as an effective tool for understanding and utilizing the resources that exist in Montgomery County.

#4: CAREEREDGE FUNDERS COLLABORATIVE (SARASOTA, FL)

careeredgefunders.org

CareerEdge Funders Collaborative is the workforce development initiative of the Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce and serves as the area's principal convener on critical workforce issues. Founded as a collaborative, CareerEdge is an employer-focused, sector-based, data-driven effort that leverages unrestricted funds to build a skilled workforce for local businesses. The Collaborative is guided by a demand-driven strategy and enhances the area's workforce through fast-track training programs, on-the-job training, internship reimbursement programs, and employer funding to upskill employees.



#5: TALENT ACTION COLLABORATIVE (BATON ROUGE, LA)

brac.org/tac

The Talent Action Collaborative (TAC) is a partnership between the Baton Rouge Area Chamber (BRAC) and East Baton Rouge Parish Schools designed to align K-12 education with the needs of business and industry. This initiative allows business and industry to steer education to the specific industry needs while training their future employees and ensuring Louisiana's talent retention. The network aims to close the disconnect between workforce and education by being business-led, industry-specific, and solution-oriented. The TAG is focused on five high-wage, high-demand sectors: Construction and Manufacturing; Med and Pre-Med; Liberal Arts and Management; Technology; and Transportation, Automotive, and Logistics.

The Collaborative is coordinated by three action teams: CEOs for Education, Strategic Operations Team, and the Five Commissions.

Comprised of 25 top area CEOs and executives representing this cross-section of sectors, the CEOs for Education task force convenes quarterly with the Superintendent of East Baton Rouge Parish Schools, Louisiana State Superintendent of Education, Commissioner of Higher Education, college chancellors, and university presidents to identify opportunities in talent pipeline to design systems and advocate for future workforce needs. Each CEO designates a representative to the Strategic Operations Committee.

The Strategic Operations Committee is comprised of practitioners in workforce development and career training, including human resources managers, talent recruiters, provosts, and heads of workforce development. They meet monthly to guide career pathways, programming, key performance indicators, and partnerships. The Committee interfaces on implementation with education senior staff, including members of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System such as the chief academic officer, assistant superintendent of curriculum, and executive director at EBR Career and Technical Education Center.

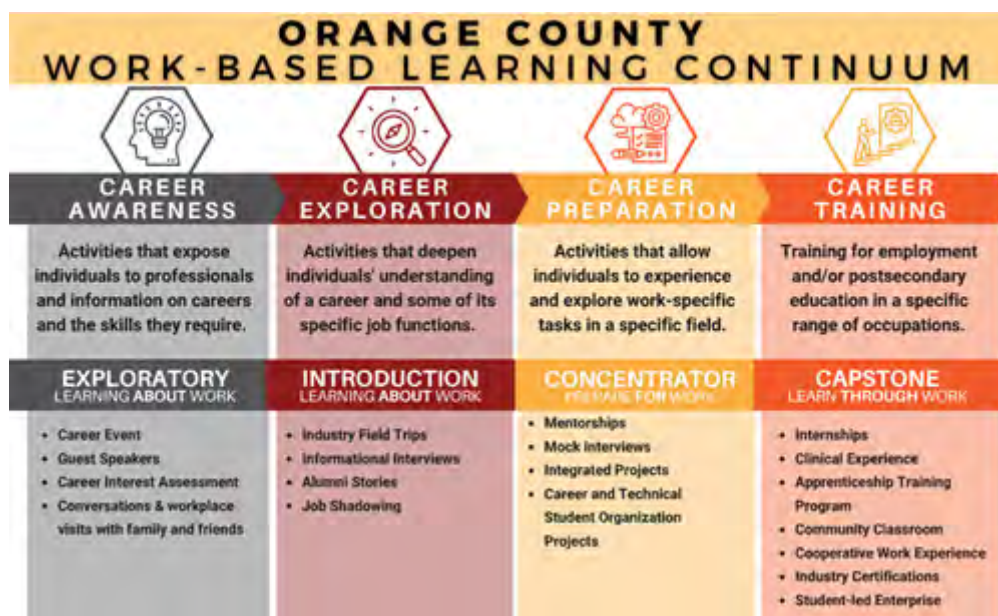
Fifteen to 20 experts in each of the five targeted sectors were recruited to guide the needs of each industry's future workforce programs. These experts have backgrounds in human resources, workforce training and development, and career training. Each month, the commissions meet to influence, create and change career education programs for K-12 and higher education, specific to their industry's needs. Each commission guides the creation of sector-specific career pathways, soft skills programs, and workplace experiential learning or internships, aligned with colleges and universities.

Joining the Talent Action Collaborative is based on investor level and invitations from business leaders already part of the group.

#6: OC PATHWAYS (ORANGE COUNTY, CA)

ocpathways.com/oc-initiatives

OC Pathways' mission is to facilitate collaboration among schools, colleges, local businesses, and community partners to prepare Orange County students for college and career success through participation in learning experiences that integrate academics and career preparation. The initiative creates a self-sustaining support system that expands career pathway opportunities and equips educators with the competencies to prepare students for high-demand, high-wage careers and expanded life opportunities.



Partners develop coursework that combines academics with career preparation across career clusters in Business Management, Computing, Education, Engineering, Healthcare and 15 associated industry sectors. The Work-Based Learning Continuum is integrated into students' program of study to outline various activities, both in and outside the classroom, that enable students to connect academic and technical content to real-world applications.

#7: CINCINNATI (OH) REGIONAL CHAMBER DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

cincinnati-chamber.com/membership/your-partner/diversity-inclusion-your-partner

The Cincinnati Regional Chamber sees as one of its goals partnering with business leaders to develop a culturally competent workforce and more equitable region. As such, its top priority is to support the business community with education and resources to help deliver economic inclusion, retain and promote diverse talent, understand health disparities and their impact on the workforce, and understand businesses' role to improve sustainable inclusion practices. The Chamber accomplishes this through multiple programs, including but not limited to:

- The CLIMB Awards, which recognize companies and organizations helping the region achieve greater heights of success through building a diverse workforce, championing equitable human resources practices, and developing inclusive cultures.
- A Cultural Competency program that develops skills for building bridges across the cultural, political and social divides to better grow the economic prosperity and equity of the region.
- Connect ERG, a network of cross-company employee resource groups across the region's 16 county metro area focused on advancing inclusion by leveraging their resources and networks to attract, grow, and retain diverse talent.
- Diversity Leadership Symposium, an event that emphasizes the importance of workplace diversity.
- Stir! Multicultural Networking Reception, a networking event for seven local chambers to come together and promote, elevate, and celebrate the many cultures in the region.

#8: ASK A LOCAL (OMAHA, NE)

omahachamber.org/talent-workforce/jobs-careers/ask-a-local/

As part of Greater Omaha's talent attraction efforts, residents can sign up for the "Ask a Local" program and have their bios and contact information posted on the Omaha Chamber's talent and workforce page. The website urges visitors to get a local perspective, noting that, "These local Omahans are ready with answers when new residents or those looking to relocate to Omaha have questions." Each Omaha ambassador lists a different set of interest areas for visitors to ask the about, including outdoor recreation, cooking, LGBTQIA+ communities, craft beers, roller derby, food, theater, sporting events, live music, neighborhoods, family activities, childcare, schools, food, and expatriate and immigrant issues.

#9: MULTICULTURAL RECEPTIONS (DES MOINES, IA)

dsmpartnership.com/news-media/news/partnership-news/greater-des-moines-partnership-announces-august-multicultural-reception

The Greater Des Moines Partnership sponsors a series of “Multicultural Receptions” to provide opportunities for those in the Greater Des Moines community to develop new relationships with others who are passionate about building an inclusive community for the region.



RESEARCH
EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY

WEST PEARLAND LIBRARY



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To view the entire plan and updates, visit PearlandProsperity.com.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Pearland Prosperity Update will be carried out through a three-phase process that began in July 2023 and will conclude in January 2024. It is led by the Pearland Prosperity Committee, a dynamic group of community leaders tasked with sharing their perspectives and insights, reviewing research and input findings, and making key decisions about the priorities and strategies that will define the updated strategy. The Pearland City Council, Pearland Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) Board of Directors, and Pearland Chamber Board of Directors are providing input and oversight throughout the process.

Phase 1: Research and Input

Successful economic development strategies are built upon a solid understanding of a community's competitive opportunities and challenges. This phase blended existing research, stakeholder input, and new quantitative analysis to develop the Research Executive Summary document that highlights the most important competitive realities in Pearland and their implications for strategy development.

Phase 2: Strategy Development

This phase will result in the development of a next-level strategy for Pearland that blends ongoing initiatives that warrant continuation with new priority programs and investment. The strategy will establish priorities for partners in Pearland to pursue in the next five years. The strategy is expected to be finalized in December.

Phase 3: Implementation Guidelines

While the updated Pearland Prosperity strategy will determine “what” partners in Pearland will do strategically for the next five years, the Implementation Guidelines will prescribe “how” that will be accomplished. This phase will consider the costs, capacity, and workflows impacting implementation partners. The Implementation Guidelines will be developed in consultation with leaders from the PEDC, City of Pearland, Chamber and other partners that will play a direct role in activating the plan. This phase is expected to conclude in January 2024.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Pearland has become a “community of choice” in Greater Houston by offering residents excellent schools, good access to job centers, and a high quality of life in one of the nation’s most racially and ethnically diverse communities. Leaders in Pearland understand, however, that they cannot afford to rest on these laurels as the community matures and regional, national, and global competitive realities are rapidly evolving.

Accordingly, partners have come together around a strategic planning process to update Pearland Prosperity, the community’s holistic economic development strategy which was adopted in early 2020. This signature program. – spearheaded by the Pearland Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) in partnership with the City of Pearland, Pearland Chamber of Commerce, and others – has been an important catalyst for the forward-thinking change. A three-phase, seven-month process will result in the creation of a refreshed Pearland Prosperity plan that will guide the community’s strategic actions for the next five years.

This Research Executive Summary represents the culmination of Phase 1. Its findings are derived from a review of numerous existing plans and studies, new quantitative research, and extensive input from key community leaders. It is divided into two sections. The Competitive Realities section provides a concise summary of competitive opportunities and challenges. The Implementation Evaluation focuses on high-level themes from the activation of the current Pearland Prosperity strategy

ABOUT BROAD RIPPLE STRATEGIES

Broad Ripple Strategies (BRS) has been selected as Pearland’s partner for the strategic planning process. BRS represents nearly 30 years of experience crafting community, workforce, and economic development strategies that build consensus, drive investment, and get results. Our team has helped more than 65 clients develop nearly 100 strategies for community and economic development, talent and workforce sustainability, and quality of place. BRS’ principals have worked everywhere from small towns and rural areas to major regions such as Des Moines, IA and Nashville, TN. BRS principals Alex Pearlstein and Matt DeVeau worked with stakeholders in Pearland to develop the Pearland Prosperity and Pearland 20/20 strategies. Elsewhere in Texas, our team has previously worked in Arlington, Austin, San Marcos, Waco, and Wichita Falls.

COMPETITIVE REALITIES

Successful economic development strategies begin with a strong understanding of a community's opportunities and challenges. Accordingly, Phase 1 of the strategic planning process was devoted to gaining an understanding of the latest competitive realities in Pearland. Phase 1 activities included:

- A review of dozens of documents such as strategic plans and research reports that are relevant to the Pearland Prosperity initiative
- Stakeholder input that consisted of more than 20 individual interviews with top public and private leaders in Pearland, a focus group with Pearland Young Professionals, and an invitation-only online survey; input from these leaders was further supplemented with findings from the 2021 National Citizen Survey (NCS), which provided insights into resident perceptions about the community's quality of life and quality of place
- Analysis of dozens of the latest data indicators that provide insights into Pearland's competitive position. To provide necessary context to the trends and issues discussed, Pearland's performance was analyzed relative to the Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land Metropolitan Statistical Area (Greater Houston) and the United States, as well as three high-performing benchmark communities: Cary, NC, McKinney, TX, and Sugar Land, TX.

The key findings from this research are synthesized in this document. **The Competitive Realities section is not intended as a comprehensive examination of every aspect of Pearland as a place to live, work, and do business; instead, this section seeks to highlight the most important themes from research and input and their implications for strategy development into a concise summary.**

At the heart of the current Pearland Prosperity strategy are two Community Goals that broadly identify the desired outcomes of Pearland's holistic economic development effort. These goals are: "Economic growth and diversification" and "A community of choice in Greater Houston." Accordingly, it is useful to evaluate the community's performance and stakeholder perceptions related to these goals. Key findings are organized into bullets under descriptive subheadings that correspond to major themes. Many of the findings herein will be familiar to leaders in Pearland, particularly those who have been engaged in Pearland Prosperity and other planning efforts. This section seeks to build upon these previous efforts and provide an updated look at what data and stakeholder input reveal to be the top strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges for the community.

1. ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DIVERSIFICATION

Significant growth and diversification were achieved through business relocations and expansions

- A key pillar of the Pearland Prosperity initiative is growing jobs in “traded” business sectors that “export” goods and services to other markets, thereby bringing new wealth into a community and diversifying its tax base. To that end, PEDC and its partners have achieved numerous economic development “wins” in recent years in the form of business relocations and expansions.
- Headlining the list is Lonza, a Swiss firm that operates the world’s largest dedicated gene and cell therapy manufacturing facility in the Lower Kirby District. While this facility opened in 2018 prior to the adoption of the current Pearland Prosperity Plan, the company has undertaken numerous expansions in recent years and now employs more than 1,000 people in Pearland.
- Stakeholders expressed pride that Pearland now has a traded-sector firm with a “four-digit headcount” and desire to see the community build on this momentum to attract more research and development and manufacturing operations in the biotechnology and medical device fields. Additional progress in this area includes Healgen Scientific and Millar, Inc. selecting Pearland in 2022.
- Other significant project wins include but are not limited to Syzygy Plasmonics, a touted Houston-based hydrogen startup, and Endress+Hauser, a Swiss-based manufacturer of laboratory instruments.

Recent economic growth and diversification may not be fully evident in the available data

- According to data provider JobsEQ, just 17 percent of jobs in Pearland are in “traded” industry sectors, the lowest among comparison geographies. Additionally, JobsEQ estimates that Pearland added just 845 traded-sector jobs between the first quarters of 2018 and 2023, a 13.2 percent growth rate that lagged all comparison cities and was only slightly ahead of Greater Houston and national averages.
- There is reason to suspect, however, that this data may not capture the full extent of recent traded-sector growth in Pearland. Economic data from JobsEQ and similar platforms are built largely on county-level data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Estimates for sub-county areas such as cities are imputed from other data sources, which are less timely, precise, and comprehensive.
- Notably, Pearland is home to corporate headquarter operations such as Buc-ee’s and Kelsey-Seybold, which employ hundreds of workers. But JobsEQ and government data sources show virtually no employment in the business sector in which headquarter operations are typically classified. Similarly, it is known that Lonza has added more than 1,000 jobs in Pearland in recent years, but this growth is not evident in sectors related to pharmaceutical and medicine manufacturing, scientific research, or any similar activity. (BRS is not aware of any major layoffs in these sectors that could offset such rapid

growth.)

- A deep dive into why Pearland's known economic growth is not evident in the data is beyond the scope of this analysis, but it is quite possible that the "on the ground" reality is more positive than industry and occupational data would suggest.

Overall, however, the economic dynamics of a "bedroom community" persist

- A key theme from previous economic development planning processes is that Pearland's economy is that of a "bedroom community," with most jobs concentrated in business sectors that cater to a local population. This dynamic is still largely in place today.
- The four largest business sectors by total employment in Pearland are (in order): health care, retail, accommodation and food services, and education. These sectors combine for roughly 25,000 jobs – 58 percent of total employment in Pearland. Nationally, these sectors account for just 41 percent of total jobs.
- Additionally, these sectors accounted for more than three out of every four new jobs in Pearland between the first quarters of 2018 and 2023, indicating that they became even more concentrated in the past five years. Nationally, the sectors combined for just 12 percent growth.
- According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program, most Pearland residents who have a job commute outside the city to work. Meanwhile, most jobs in Pearland are filled by workers who live somewhere else. LEHD data also reveals that Pearland residents who commute elsewhere for work typically hold higher-paying jobs than individuals who commute into the city for work. These trends are consistent with stakeholder input that many local residents work in nearby job hubs such as the Texas Medical Center (TMC) and NASA, while many workers in service industry jobs live elsewhere.
- According to data from JobsEQ (which utilizes LEHD data but is not directly comparable) there are roughly 63,000 individuals who live in Pearland and are employed compared to approximately 43,000 jobs based within the Pearland city limits. This works out to a ratio of roughly 68 jobs based in Pearland for every 100 workers. This is comparable to the dynamic seen in McKinney (63 per 100), but is quite different from Cary, NC (117) and Sugar Land (161), which are themselves major job centers.

The impact of remote and hybrid work in Pearland is difficult to assess

- Commuting patterns in the United States were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, as many jobs in professional services and traditional "white collar" fields transitioned to increased remote and "hybrid" work. This has a variety of significant implications for economic development, from the amount of office space firms require to the types of "weekday amenities" that talented individuals look

for in a community.

- Unfortunately, information on work-from-home trends is not available for Pearland or any of the comparison cities through the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) 2022 1-year estimates due to insufficient survey data.
- That said, JobsEQ classifies occupations by whether they are rarely, occasionally, or frequently remote. Among workers who live in Pearland, 63.3 percent work in an occupation that is "rarely remote" such as nursing or a manufacturing job, lower than the averages for Greater Houston (71.6) and the United States (71.4).
- Approximately 14.3 percent of workers who live in Pearland hold a job in a "frequently remote" occupation such as software development. This is higher than the averages for Greater Houston (11.0 percent) and the United States (11.6), though slightly below Sugar Land (16.5) and far below category-leader Cary, NC (23.6).
- While it is not possible to develop precise estimates for the proportion of Pearland residents who are engaged in remote and hybrid work, the fact that more than one-third of its workers are in jobs that are likely to allow for at least occasional remote work suggests that this is a significant competitive issue for Pearland (as it is for most communities around the country).

Pearland's educated and skilled workforce remains its top asset to support economic growth

- Diversifying an economy is a long-term undertaking, but Pearland is fortunate to possess the single most important factor for economic success: a highly educated and skilled workforce.
- According to ACS 5-year estimates covering 2017 to 2021, 58.2 percent of Pearland residents aged 25 and over held an associate's degree or higher, nearly 16 percentage points above the national average. This is a significant competitive advantage, though one that many other highly educated suburbs can boast. Pearland had the lowest associate's and bachelor's degree attainment rates among the comparison cities, and these gaps increased slightly between the five-year periods ending in 2016 and 2021.
- As previously referenced, JobsEQ provides insights into the types that workers who live in Pearland hold (regardless of where that job is based). Among Pearland's residents, the largest occupation by total employment is "general and operations managers," with occupations such as accountants and auditors, software developers, and project management specialists also in the top 20.
- A location quotient (LQ) is a calculation that compares the share of local employment to the share of national employment for a particular sector or occupation. An LQ above 1.0 may indicate some competitive advantage in a given sector or occupational competency.

- The occupation with the highest LQ among Pearland's resident workforce is "chemical equipment operators and tenders," which is consistent with the strength of the energy and chemical sectors in Greater Houston. With an LQ of 4.04, this occupation is more than four times as concentrated among Pearland's resident workforce than it is nationwide.
- Other occupations with strong LQs include computer network specialists, logisticians, computer network architects, network and computer systems administrators, and various types of engineers. These occupations suggest that Pearland's residents possess a variety of skills and credentials that can support a broad range of economic activity.
- Stakeholders noted that Pearland is served by a strong set of workforce development assets, including but not limited to: Alvin Community College, San Jacinto Community College, the University of Houston-Clear Lake at Pearland, as well as excellent PK-12 school systems and their career-oriented high schools Turner College and Career Center and the JB Hensler College & Career Academy.
- Stakeholders also praised significant progress on workforce development issues that have occurred in the community in recent years, partially as a direct result of Pearland Prosperity; these issues are discussed in the Implementation Evaluation section.

Continued investment in sites, infrastructure, and related improvements is needed to support growth

- Stakeholders noted that the success of the Lower Kirby District has been instrumental in the community's economic diversification. According to PEDC data, there are now more than 2,000 jobs based in the area across nine large employers, with the total increasing on a regular basis.
- Stakeholders said that the master planning and community branding work that has gone into Lower Kirby has been a major factor in attracting firms to the area, as it offers a differentiated presentation and "feel" relative to competition in nearby unincorporated areas. Said one individual, "Seeing the investment of time and dollars (in the Lower Kirby District) come back and pay off has been good."
- Input participants said the supply of readily developable land in the Lower Kirby District is limited, and many other potential sites throughout the community have one or more issues (complex ownership, environmental concerns, etc.) that could make them difficult to make ready for development at the speed with which many competitive site location processes are conducted.
- While there is not full consensus on the issue among Pearland stakeholders, if the community is to "remain in the game" for many future economic development projects, it will need to proactively pursue the development of additional industrial and commercial sites along with the necessary supportive infrastructure, "curb appeal" upgrades, and so on.

Perceptions of Pearland's business climate are mixed

- Pearland business owners and representatives who participated in the 2021 National Business Survey (NBS) had generally positive views of Pearland's business climate. Approximately 85 percent of respondents rated Pearland as a "good" or "excellent" place to do business, higher than the national average on similar surveys carried out by the National Research Center and Polco. A similar percentage of respondents said they were likely or very likely to recommend operating a business in Pearland to someone who asks.
- But some input participants contacted as part of this process expressed significant frustrations when it comes to navigating permitting and zoning processes in the community.
- The city has sought to make its development process easier to navigate with the adoption of the OpenCounter online tool that assists developers, businesses, and others with navigating the initial steps of the permitting and zoning processes. Some stakeholders said they would like to see the community take further steps toward creating a true "one-stop" development process by integrating fields such as engineering into the Community Development team.

Stakeholders desire continued support for entrepreneurs and small businesses

- In addition to growing Pearland's economy through business attraction and retention, Pearland Prosperity also seeks to support the formation and growth of new businesses in the community. Stakeholders contacted during this process said enhancing assistance for entrepreneurs and smaller incumbent businesses remains an important priority.
- As part of the implementation of Pearland Prosperity, stakeholders in Pearland partnered with an external organization to create the Pearland Innovation Hub to support entrepreneurship in the community. As discussed in the Implementation Evaluation section, progress has been slower than desired, but stakeholders were generally pleased with the fact that the issue is being addressed in a strategic fashion.
- While it is not feasible to contact every business in a community through a formal business retention and expansion (BRE) program, stakeholders said they would like to see the community make more resources available for incumbent small businesses in Pearland, perhaps in the form of increased access to financial resources and technical assistance. Said one individual, "We want existing businesses to feel that we are there for them and attentive to their needs."

2. A COMMUNITY OF CHOICE IN GREATER HOUSTON

Pearland's "core value proposition" remains strong

- Stakeholders contacted during the Phase 1 engagement process were asked to identify Pearland's greatest strengths as a community. Excellent public schools, (relatively) affordable housing stock, public safety, and proximity to job centers such as TMC were cited as top community strengths in nearly every conversation.
- Stakeholders said that these factors have been Pearland's "core value proposition" for decades, and previous strategic planning processes have confirmed these strengths.
- Another major differentiator for Pearland as place to live, work, and do business is its racial and ethnic diversity. According to an analysis in the City of Pearland's Benchmark Cities Study from 2022, Pearland had the highest "diversity index" among a set of 11 cities as of the 2020 Census; a diversity index is "the calculated probability than any two randomly chosen people in a city will be of a different ethnicity."
- Pearland has significant populations in the nation's four largest racial and ethnic groups: Hispanic or Latino, White, Black, and Asian. In fact, of the 632 Census places (cities, towns, etc.) with at least 65,000 residents as of the 2020 Census, Pearland was one of just 33 communities with at least 10 percent of its population in each of these groups. The other Texas cities on this list are Garland, Irving, Lewisville, McKinney, and Richardson.

As population and housing growth continue to slow, Pearland is firmly in a new era

- Stakeholders in Pearland have for many years understood that housing development boom that fueled rapid population growth in recent decades is coming to an end. There are very few large tracts of undeveloped land left in the city, and as one input participant put it, "most of what's left has issues which is why it's still on the table."
- Various data indicators confirm that Pearland has indeed entered a new phase of its life as a city. Between the 2010 and 2020 Census, Pearland's population grew by nearly 38 percent, more than five times the national average and significantly higher than the overall growth rate in Greater Houston of approximately 20 percent. During this time period, the community added nearly 3,500 residents per year. But between 2020 and 2022, the Census Bureau estimates that Pearland has added just 480 residents per year, and the community is now adding population at a slower pace than Greater Houston as a whole.
- Data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) shows that between 2000 and 2019, Pearland permitted nearly 25,000 single-family housing units, an average of 1,247 per year.

Single-family building permits have declined in all but one year between 2015 and 2022, however, and in 2022 just 338 single-family building permits were issued in the city.

- Stakeholders noted that Pearland ISD is also showing signs of smaller enrollments, with this year's kindergarten class being smaller than the graduating class. Per input participants, this decline is being driven by both a local slowdown in growth and broader demographic trends as well as less "churn" in the housing market as lending conditions have tightened and many individuals are opting to "age in place" instead of selling to young families.

Stakeholders perceive threats to Pearland's status as a "community of choice"

- Growth by itself is not a reliable indicator of a community's desirability. Many highly successful communities and regions have flat or even declining populations, while some fast-growing communities face major competitive challenges.
- As Pearland continues to mature and growth slows, however, some stakeholders expressed concerns that Pearland is facing new competitive challenges for attracting talent. As one leader stated, "We could soon be in a position where we're not a community of choice."
- As previously discussed, strengths such as good schools and proximity to jobs creates a "sticky" value proposition. But these factors are -- by themselves -- not sufficient to set Pearland apart as a true destination for jobs and talent, as many other communities in Greater Houston and around the country can boast similar strengths.
- Additionally, stakeholders identified several internal and external threats to Pearland's desire to be a "community of choice." Perhaps the biggest among these is growth in other parts of the region. Said one individual, "The rest of Brazoria County is continuing to grow, and they've had an opportunity to learn from Pearland and get ahead of their growth so they don't have to play catchup mode."
- According to HUD data, there has indeed been an uptick in development activity in communities such as Alvin and Manvel in recent years as building in Pearland has slowed. Between 2013 and 2017, Pearland issued an annual average of building permits 1,390 total housing units compared to 497 per year in Alvin and Manvel combined. Between 2018 and 2022, however, Pearland's figure declined to 611 while Alvin and Manvel combined for an annual average of 948. Manvel alone has permitted more housing units than Pearland in 2020, 2021, and 2022, the first three years that this has happened since 1980, as far back as records are available online.
- Stakeholders expressed a concern that younger families will bypass Pearland for these communities, and as retail developments come online in these areas, Pearland's sales tax revenues could slip. Said one individual, "Our biggest problem right now is that Manvel is exploding and commercial developers

and big retail groups are looking there instead of here. We need to focus on what's going to make people stop here even if the house costs a bit more."

- Input participants also expressed a concern that many commercial and residential areas of Pearland have begun showing their age and could be perceived as less desirable. Many areas, particularly on the east side of town, were developed prior to the adoption of development standards and lack high-quality infrastructure, aesthetic appeal, or both. Stakeholders said that Pearland could be at risk of falling behind from a "curb appeal" perspective without significant reinvestment both by the private owners and investors and the public sector to ensure infrastructure, streetscaping, sidewalks, etc., are modern and well-maintained.
- Stakeholders also noted that the preferences of consumers – particularly the type of skilled and educated individuals and families who have historically been drawn to Pearland – are shifting in an era of remote and hybrid work.

A clear desire to enhance quality of place but a lack of consensus on what and who

- Given the aforementioned threats to Pearland's status as a community of choice, stakeholders were in broad agreement that Pearland must do something to enhance its quality of place in order to continue to be an attractive destination for jobs and talent. There was a lack of consensus, however, on what exactly should be done and who should take the lead.
- Pearland stakeholders said the community needs to develop more "entertainment options" and "amenities" that appeal to current and future residents. Said one individual referring to the trend of creating "live, work, play" communities, "We've done the 'live' and 'work' parts, but the 'play' part needs a lot of attention."
- But when stakeholders were asked to get specific about what types of new amenities they desire, answers varied widely. Some input participants said they would like to see an "entertainment district" with live music, a variety of dining options, and social gathering spaces. Others said they would not support such a concept and were strongly opposed to Pearland being a "nightlife destination."
- Stakeholders also noted that Pearland faces intense competition from dining, shopping, and entertainment options in nearby communities. Said one individual, "Our struggle is we are surrounded by that stuff and we need something unique and different."
- Funding is also a major consideration, with some stakeholders expressing skepticism over whether the public sector should play a role in catalyzing quality of place improvements. One input participant said, "My skepticism from the beginning with (any plan) is that you bring everyone in the room, identify what you want, but don't identify the funding sources or do the critical side of it."

- Other areas for improvement cited by stakeholders include:
 - Overall community aesthetics and the “look and feel” of Pearland inclusive of streetscapes, landscaping, etc., though some stakeholders said they do not support continued use of PEDC or public funds on projects such as gateway enhancements
 - Enhanced arts and cultural opportunities; stakeholders expressed support for the Cultural Arts Master Plan currently under development in conjunction with Visit Pearland
 - Continued expansion and improvement of parks, trails, and green spaces; previous research has revealed that Pearland has relatively limited public parkland compared to its neighbors, though private parks owned by homeowners associations and public parks in nearby communities help make up some of the difference

Potential locations for entertainment and amenities each have opportunities and challenges

- Stakeholders identified several potential locations that would be a good fit for enhanced quality of place amenities and entertainment options, including the Old Townsite, the northeast corner of the Lower Kirby District, Pearland Town Center, and the Pearland Parkway Corridor.
- Fortunately, the market potential of these four areas were studied as part of a 2022 Retail Analysis prepared for PEDC and the City of Pearland by MJB Consulting and Greensfelder Real Estate Strategy. This report provides an in-depth examination of the market potential for retail development (with some discussion of supportive amenities) in each sub-area and offers implementation recommendations for partners in Pearland to pursue in the coming years.
- Per the 2022 Retail Analysis, Lower Kirby sub-area would be well-suited for to “horizontal” mixed-use development, potentially in conjunction with some type of non-retail, non-residential “destination” amenity. It states: “the Lower Kirby area is much better suited for destination uses ... From a use perspective, incorporating significant destination, non-retail components would complement retail uses, and act as a non-retail anchor for the retail component.” Stakeholders noted, however, that a recent attempt to create a mixed-use development at the site was unsuccessful in part because of the amount of public subsidy that would have been required.
- The Old Townsite was frequently discussed during the stakeholder engagement process. Simply put, there is a strong desire on the part of many Pearland residents to see this area revitalized, but nearly all stakeholders recognize that doing so will be complicated. The Retail Analysis stated that because the area does not have the larger lot sizes needed to support large-scale commodity retail and is better suited for “specialty retail” such as locally owned restaurants, galleries, independent home furnishing stores, and so on. Stakeholders were divided as to the feasibility of a large-scale redevelopment, but

there was consensus that aesthetic upgrades and beautification of the public realm and incremental commercial redevelopment playing off of the new Sullivan Brothers residential development currently underway represent promising near-term opportunities.

- Stakeholders expressed significant concerns that the nation's rapidly evolving retail climate could create further challenges for Class B and Class C shopping centers – Pearland Town Center included. This sentiment was largely echoed in the Retail analysis, and stakeholders expressed a desire to continue working with the Town Center's owners on how to position the area for long-term success.

Housing costs have increased consistent with regional and national trends

- Another major theme with respect to Pearland's status as a "community of choice" was housing. Specifically, many stakeholders expressed concerns that housing costs have increased dramatically in Pearland in recent years, pricing out many young families with children as well as many workers essential to the local economy.
- Data reveal that while home prices have indeed grown rapidly in Pearland in recent years, this is consistent with trends both within Greater Houston and nationally. Census data indicate that Pearland has the best "home affordability ratio" among the comparison geographies. An affordability ratio is calculated by dividing the median home price in a given community by its median household income. Pearland's home affordability ratio was 2.5 according to 2016-2021 ACS estimates, lower than that of Sugar Land (2.8) and Greater Houston (3.1).
- The real estate marketplace firm Zillow provides more comprehensive and current housing estimates using its own proprietary data. The Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI) provides a seasonally adjusted "typical value" for all housing types (e.g., single-family, condo. etc.) in the 35th to 65th percentile range of property value for a given geography. Between August 2018 and August 2023, the ZHVI value for Pearland increased by nearly \$106,000 – a trend that almost certainly contributed to local perceptions of runaway prices. But this 39.4 percent increase was actually the second lowest among comparison geographies, slightly ahead of Sugar Land (38.6 percent) and lower than Greater Houston (44.1 percent).
- In other words, while real estate prices have indeed increased in Pearland, this is consistent with both national trends and dynamics within Greater Houston. That said, with Zillow estimating a "typical" Pearland home at \$374,496, concerns that homes may be out of reach for many buyers (e.g., younger families) are well-founded.
- Some stakeholders noted that housing issues can be difficult for local communities to address. But Pearland does have control over the types of residential development it allows. And one significant

theme from the input process is that there was general support among stakeholders for multifamily residential, townhomes, and other forms of denser residential development. In the experience of BRS' principals, this represents a significant shift in opinion from previous planning processes. Stakeholders said that the community is no longer considering "garden-style" apartment developments but is likely open to higher-quality multifamily developments that are able to generate a large amount of tax revenue per acre. Said one leader, "If they look good, are built right, and are in the right location we'll take a look at them due to the fiscal reality"

Future opportunities will come through "infill" development and redevelopment

- As Pearland begins a new era of slower growth and maturation, "infill" development and redevelopment will be issues that come to the forefront.
- Stakeholders said that while large tracts of developable land are now largely nonexistent on the market, there are numerous smaller parcels of land that would be difficult or impossible to assemble but that can accommodate smaller residential uses such as a townhome development with perhaps a dozen units. Some stakeholders said they would like to see the community welcome such uses and attempt to minimize friction in the development process in order to expand the community's housing supply.
- Redevelopment was also a major theme in input. Said one stakeholder, "Now that things are starting to slow down a little bit, we need to reinvest in older areas of the community." Another said, "Growth is going to look different than before – if we have the right redevelopment strategies in place we stand to capture a lot of that"
- Input participants cautioned, however, that redevelopment comes with significant challenges. One individual said, "Redevelopment is an easy word to say but it's a very tough thing to do." Stakeholders noted that redeveloping residential and commercial areas comes with additional and often unpredictable costs. Redeveloping older commercial properties such as strip centers also may not be economically feasible if a given property is still generating significant rental income for its owners.
- But despite these challenges, stakeholders said they would like to see the community take a proactive approach to promoting redevelopment, potentially through a formal, professionally staffed initiative.

Maintaining and upgrading infrastructure will be vital for Pearland as it matures

- The importance of redevelopment is strongly connected with a need to maintain and/or upgrade infrastructure. Said one stakeholder, "The biggest thing is constantly addressing infrastructure and the bones of the community – if those aren't solid the community becomes weak."
- New road connections drew significant praise from stakeholders, with these enhanced transportation

connections frequently cited as one of the most positive developments in the community in recent years. Stakeholders expressed a desire to complement progress on east-west connectivity with enhanced north-south routes.

- Leaders demonstrated a commitment to upgrading and maintaining infrastructure in August of 2023 when PEDC, with the support of City Council, agreed to allocate 20 percent of annual sales tax revenues to fund upgrades to utilities, drainage, and other infrastructure in the Old Townsite and other areas near SH 35.
- While input participants expressed strong support for ensuring that older areas of the community are adequately maintained, several individuals said they do not want infrastructure to be framed as another “east Pearland versus west Pearland” discussion and instead focus on maintaining and upgrading infrastructure throughout the community.

IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION

The Implementation Evaluation in this section provides a high-level overview of the implementation of the current Pearland Prosperity from its launch in January 2020 to the present. This section is not a tactic-by-tactic analysis of progress or a recitation of accomplishments that may be found in annual reports and meticulous tracking documents maintained by PEDC. Instead, it focuses on high-level themes for the Pearland Prosperity Committee and partners to consider as they determine the structure, content, and activation of the updated Pearland Prosperity plan. Similar to the preceding section, the findings in the Implementation Evaluation are organized into bullets under descriptive subheadings. These themes reflect the perspectives provided by staff and volunteers through individual interviews and the online survey as well as BRS' analysis of materials provided by PEDC.

An overall success under difficult circumstances

- Generally speaking, stakeholders had high praise for the Pearland Prosperity initiative as a whole. When asked to assess Pearland Prosperity's impact on the community, nearly 95 percent of respondents said the initiative had either a "positive" or "very positive" impact.
- Input participants noted that the plan was also launched on the eve of the COVID-19 pandemic, which made implementation of any strategic plan a major challenge for a significant portion of 2020 and beyond. Said one stakeholder, "It was very difficult to get a lot of things done during the pandemic. The results were phenomenal based on these conditions."

Partners made significant progress on each of the strategy's seven Focus Areas

- As detailed in the PEDC's annual reports and the organization's thorough tracking of implementation progress, partners made significant headway on each of Pearland Prosperity's seven Focus Areas. In fact, of the 25 strategic initiatives in the current plan, just one ("2.3 – Establish a revolving loan fund (RLF) to incentivize primary business formation and growth") was still listed as a "Future Initiative" on PEDC's most recent implementation tracking matrix.
- This is not to say that every other initiative is now or will be completed. As will be discussed under subsequent headings, some efforts may require a renewed push to achieve success, while other recommendations are no longer appropriate and will likely not be included in the updated strategy. But overall, PEDC and its partners made impressive progress on activating the Pearland Prosperity plan in the past three 3.5 years.

A need to “re-ignite” efforts around entrepreneurship

- One Focus Area where progress was slower than desired was “2. Business Formation and Early-Stage Growth.”
- The centerpiece of this effort is “2.2 – Establish a hub for entrepreneurship to concentrate local services and connect to the regional ecosystem.” PEDC and the City of Pearland commissioned a Market Opportunity Assessment to study the feasibility of an entrepreneurship hub. Completed in 2021, this report ultimately recommended moving forward with business model planning for a hub. After a bid process, the Houston-based firm The Cannon was selected to implement the Pearland Innovation Hub in November 2021. The initiative’s first employee, the “Hub Navigator” was hired in May 2022.
- Stakeholders said the core concept behind the current model is to stimulate business growth for firms across the industry and growth-stage spectrums with free programming including mentoring/coaching and regular events for entrepreneurs.
- While stakeholders generally agreed that providing support for entrepreneurs and small businesses is an essential need, they noted that the Innovation Hub is not yet meeting its goals with respect to key metrics of signing up coaches and entrepreneurs.
- Stakeholders noted that the initiative is itself still a “startup” finding its footing and expressed optimism that the Innovation Hub is a good concept in need of improved execution.
- The 2021 Market Opportunity Assessment recommended a “virtual” hub concept due to a lack of near-term demand for a physical entrepreneurship facility in Pearland. Some stakeholders said they felt the virtual approach was a hindrance, however. As one individual said, business owners in Pearland tend to be “hands-on people” to whom “digital communities are not appealing.” These stakeholders expressed optimism that the Innovation Hub moving into a privately operated co-working space near Pearland Town Center will provide a major boost. According to input participants, the Innovation Hub will occupy three offices and have up to 10 spaces for co-working or hot desks at the facility, which is also expected to include amenities such as a kitchen, podcast studio, and small event space.
- Other suggestions from stakeholders for how the Innovation Hub can be improved include being more intentional about marketing and branding the initiative in the community and clarifying what, if any, additional resources and/or technical support are needed to ensure success.

Quality of place priorities have evolved

- As previously discussed, there is not yet consensus among stakeholders in Pearland about the type of quality of place enhancements the community should pursue and how it should pursue them. That said, there was broad agreement that the “catalytic anchor projects” envisioned in Strategic Initiative

6.2 – namely an indoor amateur sports complex and a hotel conference center – are not currently priorities.

- While some stakeholders said they still support one or both of these ideas, there was broad agreement that there is presently no political appetite to pursue them. According to stakeholders, the primary concern with both concepts was their potential to create ongoing funding gaps that would need to be filled by the public sector.
- Said one stakeholder, “The sports complex would have been nice but it would have been a burden on the city. We didn’t want to be saddled with maintenance costs” Another stakeholder said of public-sector support, “If someone wants to build a hotel/conference center, give them an incentive. But let’s not become the bondholders and the debt financiers”
- These sentiments speak to a core issue that stakeholders in Pearland will need to address with the updated Pearland Prosperity plan. With broad agreement that Pearland needs to make quality of place enhancements in order to maintain its status as a “community of choice,” what role can and should the public sector play in catalyzing these improvements?
- Workforce development progress represents a strong foundation for next-level opportunities
- One area where partners in Pearland made strong progress was Focus Area 7 – “Workforce and Talent.” Said one stakeholder, “In the past 12-14 months, we’ve seen more workforce development progress than we’ve seen in the previous 10 years.”
- Stakeholders pointed to the Chamber and PEDC each adding staff capacity for workforce development as a major positive development and praised initial progress such as the “Work In Pearland” initiative and the partnership between PEDC, Alvin Community College, and Lonza to create a biotechnology certificate program.
- Input participants also noted that the 2022-2025 Workforce Strategy Action Plan provides an ideal blueprint for enhancing talent efforts in the coming years.
- Stakeholders contacted as part of this strategic planning process highlighted several potential “next steps” that they would like to see the community prioritize. One of these is creating a more formal, action-oriented “partnership framework” for workforce development supported by professional staff at the Chamber and PEDC. Said one stakeholder, “I would love to have a smaller meeting of people in the workforce (space) so we can come together. We are each doing our own little thing but I don’t feel like we’re working together.” Another stakeholder said, “Having someone who says ‘I need an hour of your time’ and put together a well programmed meeting would be very helpful.”
- Input participants also expressed support for the establishment of formal “Career Pathways” – a series

of connected education and training programs that enable students to “stack” skills and credentials over time in order to access better job opportunities in a given field. Stakeholders said manufacturing, biotechnology, and health care service delivery (e.g., nursing and related fields) represent the most promising career pathway opportunities for Pearland. Stakeholders further noted that the University of Houston-Clear Lake at Pearland being positioned as an “organizing hub for professional and continuing education programs” within the Clear Lake campus network presents significant opportunities in this area.

- Input participants also noted a need to continue working on initiatives to support diverse talent and emerging leaders. Said one stakeholder, “If there is a criticism, it’s that Pearland is a very diverse community ... but I don’t think we do enough to highlight or celebrate that diversity. We need to see more people of color and women in roles of high visibility.” Stakeholders praised the Chamber’s newly formed Diversity Business Council and its Young Professionals group and expressed a desire to continue to support the work of these groups.

Formal communications were strong; stakeholders desire more awareness at the “grassroots” level

- In BRS’ experience, many communities with holistic economic development strategies face challenges communicating their strategic priorities and implementation progress to a variety of internal and external audiences. Acknowledging this difficulty, however, Pearland stakeholders said – and BRS’ principals agree – that the PEDC and its partners have done an excellent overall job communicating the successes of Pearland Prosperity.
- PEDC staff have meticulously tracked implementation progress and communicated key “wins” to internal and external audiences through press releases, online media, earned media, and other avenues.
- Stakeholders said while this messaging has been instrumental in keeping Pearland’s most “plugged-in” leaders and citizens informed, the community would benefit from reaching a broader range of audiences. One stakeholder said that there are “micropockets” of information within Pearland; as an example, this individual noted that many residents get most of their information from sources such as HOA meetings. Stakeholders said there is an opportunity to communicate more directly with such groups to convey the overall value of the initiative. Said one stakeholder, “Lots of things with the strategy aren’t tangible (things) that people can see all of the time. We need to be our own biggest cheerleader.”

A need to convey that Pearland Prosperity is a “team effort” with “clear ownership roles”

- Stakeholders said that Pearland Prosperity is frequently perceived as “PEDC’s strategy.” As Pearland’s economic development organization, PEDC is indeed instrumental in advancing the community’s holistic economic development strategy. But input participants noted that Pearland Prosperity is not an organizational strategy but instead a program of work for the community. The City of Pearland, the Pearland Chamber of Commerce, education and training providers, and numerous other partners have a role to play in advancing strategic implementation.
- Stakeholders said they would like to see the updated Pearland Prosperity framework and implementation effort clearly communicate that the initiative is a community strategy. At the same time, input participants stressed the importance of ensuring that each strategic initiative has a clear organizational “owner” to ensure that it is implemented in a timely fashion.

Some desire to “streamline” the overall program of work

- Stakeholders in Pearland understand that there are numerous factors that influence a community’s competitiveness, ranging from sites and buildings to quality of place amenities that can be “differentiators” for attracting jobs, talent, and investment.
- The current Pearland Prosperity strategy was designed to address a wide range of topics in order to grow and diversify the local economy and ensure that Pearland remains an attractive destination for individuals and businesses. Stakeholders broadly supported this approach, but some input participants suggested that the community may benefit from a more “streamlined” strategy with a smaller set of high-impact initiatives. A key task for the Pearland Prosperity Committee will be determining whether a more focused program of work is desirable for the updated strategic plan.



PEARLAND

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES



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To view the entire plan and updates, visit PearlandProsperity.com.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Pearland Prosperity Update will be carried out through a three-phase process that began in July 2023 and will conclude in January 2024. It is led by the Pearland Prosperity Committee, a dynamic group of community leaders tasked with sharing their perspectives and insights, reviewing research and input findings, and making key decisions about the priorities and strategies that will define the updated strategy. The Pearland City Council, Pearland Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) Board of Directors, and Pearland Chamber Board of Directors are providing input and oversight throughout the process.

Phase 1: Research and Input

Successful economic development strategies are built upon a solid understanding of a community's competitive opportunities and challenges. This phase blended existing research, stakeholder input, and new quantitative analysis to develop the Research Executive Summary document that highlights the most important competitive realities in Pearland and their implications for strategy development.

Phase 2: Strategy Development

This phase will result in the development of a next-level strategy for Pearland that blends ongoing initiatives that warrant continuation with new priority programs and investment. The strategy will establish priorities for partners in Pearland to pursue in the next five years. The strategy is expected to be finalized in December.

Phase 3: Implementation Guidelines

While the updated Pearland Prosperity strategy will determine “what” partners in Pearland will do strategically for the next five years, the Implementation Guidelines will prescribe “how” that will be accomplished. This phase will consider the costs, capacity, and workflows impacting implementation partners. The Implementation Guidelines will be developed in consultation with leaders from the PEDC, City of Pearland, Chamber and other partners that will play a direct role in activating the plan. This phase is expected to conclude in January 2024.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Pearland has become a “community of choice” in Greater Houston by offering residents excellent schools, good access to job centers, and a high quality of life in one of the nation’s most racially and ethnically diverse communities. Leaders in Pearland understand, however, that they cannot afford to rest on these laurels as the community matures and regional, national, and global competitive realities are rapidly evolving.

Accordingly, partners have come together around a strategic planning process to update Pearland Prosperity, the community’s holistic economic development strategy which was adopted in early 2020. This signature program – spearheaded by the Pearland Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) in partnership with the City of Pearland, the Pearland Chamber of Commerce, and others – has been an important catalyst for the forward-thinking change. A three-phase, seven-month process will result in the creation of a refreshed Pearland Prosperity plan that will guide the community’s strategic actions for the next five years. This document, the Pearland Prosperity Update, represents the culmination of the process’ second phase.

ABOUT BROAD RIPPLE STRATEGIES

Broad Ripple Strategies (BRS) has been selected as Pearland’s partner for the strategic planning process. BRS represents nearly 30 years of experience crafting community, workforce, and economic development strategies that build consensus, drive investment, and get results. Our team has helped more than 65 clients develop nearly 100 strategies for community and economic development, talent and workforce sustainability, and quality of place. BRS’ principals have worked everywhere from small towns and rural areas to major regions such as Des Moines, IA and Nashville, TN. BRS principals Alex Pearlstein and Matt DeVeau worked with stakeholders in Pearland to develop the Pearland Prosperity and Pearland 20/20 strategies. Elsewhere in Texas, our team has previously worked in Arlington, Austin, San Marcos, Waco, and Wichita Falls.

STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW

The Pearland Prosperity Update is a holistic economic development strategy that will guide the actions of partners in Pearland for the next five years. It is based on key findings from a seven-month process that entailed in-depth quantitative research, stakeholder input, and guidance from a wide range of community leaders including the Pearland Prosperity Committee, Pearland City Council, and the boards of directors of the PEDC and Chamber. The strategic framework of the updated strategic plan is shown below. At the heart of the framework is a **Core Goal**:

**"Pearland will be the community of choice for
PEOPLE and BUSINESS in our region."**

Partners in Pearland can pursue the Core Goal by advancing 11 Key Initiatives that correspond to specific programs and/or investments. Six Key Initiatives are oriented primarily toward making Pearland a community of choice for businesses while five Key Initiatives are geared toward attracting and retaining residents.



IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

The Pearland Prosperity Update strategic plan represents what the community will do in the next five years to achieve its Core Goal: “Pearland will be the community of choice for PEOPLE and BUSINESS in our region.” The Implementation Guidelines in this document provide recommendations on how partners can put this ambitious plan into action.

Pearland is entering its third strategic implementation cycle in a position of strength following two highly successful strategic plans – Pearland 20/20 and the first iteration of Pearland Prosperity. Stakeholders had high praise for the implementation of the first Pearland Prosperity strategic plan. In an online survey for local leaders conducted as part of the “update” process, 95 percent of respondents said the initiative had either a “positive” or “very positive” impact on the community. And according to the PEDC’s tracking data, implementation partners made significant progress on 24 out of the plan’s 25 strategic initiatives.

These perceptions and outcomes are a testament to the ability of partner organizations in Pearland to work collaboratively to advance a holistic strategic plan. But there are always opportunities for improvement, and the Pearland Prosperity Update is an ambitious follow-on strategy that will require new capacity and resources to successfully activate. The Implementation Guidelines offer recommendations on how partners in Pearland can structure implementation so that it is streamlined, efficient, and flexible, with clearly defined roles for the organizations and entities that will carry out the day-to-day work of strategic implementation. The document is divided into four sections:

1. Implementation Structure
2. Action Matrices
3. Budget and Funding Considerations
4. Performance Measures

The **first section** establishes a structure for activating the strategic plan, including recommended roles for implementation partners and volunteers. The **second section** identifies lead and support entities and launch dates for each recommendation in the plan. The **third section** details the resources that must be developed to support certain aspects of strategic implementation, including new staff capacity and programs. The fourth section provides a brief overview of metrics that partners can use to track implementation progress and outcomes.

1. IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE

Successfully activating a holistic economic development strategy is a significant undertaking that requires time, resources, and a high degree of coordination among various public, private, and nonprofit partners. Stakeholders in Pearland understand this reality from having successfully advanced two such strategic plans in recent years: the Pearland 20/20 Strategic Plan (completed in 2013) and the first Pearland Prosperity Strategic Plan (2020). Over the past decade-plus, partners in Pearland have built significant organizational capacity, forged strong working relationships, and created a “culture of collaboration” to support strategic implementation. As stakeholders now consider what must be done to successfully activate the Pearland Prosperity Update, there is no need to “reinvent the wheel.” Instead, the task is primarily about fine-tuning an already successful approach, incorporating lessons learned in recent years and continuing to build capacity to match an ambitious update to the community’s strategic plan.

This section outlines a proposed implementation structure for the Pearland Prosperity Update. It begins with a discussion of transitioning from the previous strategic plan to the current iteration. This is followed by identifying proposed lead organizations for each of the Pearland Prosperity Update’s 11 Key Initiatives; these are the public, private, and nonprofit partners that with the capacity to “own” each initiative and work with partners to carry out the actual work of strategic implementation. Next are recommendations related to the administrative support and communications necessary to ensure that implementation is well-coordinated. The section concludes with guidance on the role that the Pearland Prosperity Committee can play in providing high-level oversight and facilitating cross-sector collaborations when needed.

TIMING THE TRANSITION TO THE PEARLAND PROSPERITY UPDATE

The Implementation Guidelines proposed for the previous version of Pearland Prosperity envisioned a five- year implementation cycle beginning in January 2020 and concluding in December 2024. But in 2023, leaders determined that an “update” to the strategic plan was needed to account for the fact that substantial implementation progress had already been achieved and to address shifting competitive realities in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and significant change in leadership in the community. The resulting strategic plan – the Pearland Prosperity Update – has been designed to incorporate ongoing initiatives from the previous strategic plan while adding new programs and investments that reflect the community’s updated priorities. Accordingly, BRS recommends that partners retire the previous strategic plan and launch the Pearland Prosperity Update immediately and begin a new five-year implementation cycle spanning from January 2024 to December 2028.

IMPLEMENTATION LEADS

Experience has shown that the work of strategic implementation occurs primarily within organizations. Activating the Pearland Prosperity Update will require multiple public, private, and nonprofit partners to devote staff capacity and resources to drive specific programs and/or investments. Leaders in Pearland have long embraced this reality; the success of the community's previous two holistic economic development strategies can be attributed in large part to the work of the City of Pearland and its various departments, the PEDC, Chamber, and other partners.

The **table on the following page** identifies partners that are well-positioned to lead the activation of each of the 11 Key Initiatives in the Pearland Prosperity Update. While BRS developed this table in consultation with community leaders, partner roles must ultimately be confirmed by boards of directors or relevant oversight structures for each entity. **Recommendations for lead and support entities for Strategic Recommendations within each Key Initiative are provided in “2. Action Matrices” beginning on page 13.**

As discussed in the “Implementation Evaluation” section of the Research Executive Summary, stakeholders said that the previous Pearland Prosperity effort was frequently perceived as “the PEDC’s strategy.” The PEDC indeed has a major role to play in advancing various strategic priorities and coordinating implementation activities. But as shown in the following table, at least eight other organizations or departments within the City of Pearland will play a role as an **“Implementation Lead”** for one or more Key Initiatives; many other partners will play a role in supporting these Key Initiatives and their component Strategic Recommendations. This is consistent with the fact that the **Pearland Prosperity Update is a community-level strategy – not a plan for any one organization.** BRS recommends that partners emphasize this reality when communicating Pearland Prosperity Update news and progress to internal audiences. (Additional discussion of the PEDC’s role in coordinating certain aspects of the implementation effort is provided later in this section.)

The following recommendations are largely consistent with current organizational roles, and new efforts within each Key Initiative can generally be incorporated into ongoing programs of work. That said, **Pearland will need to develop new capacity to advance certain recommendations related to redevelopment.** These generally fall under the “Places to Gather,” “Old Town Revitalization,” and “Infill and Redevelopment” Key Initiatives and are closely connected to other priorities such as implementing recommendations from the 2022 Pearland Retail Analysis. While successful redevelopment efforts will primarily be led by the private sector, additional work is required to “prime the pump” for new investment. Based on conversations with stakeholders

and an analysis of existing organizational roles and capacities, **BRS recommends that new organizational capacity be developed within the PEDC (and possibly other organizations) to support redevelopment initiatives;** a description of a proposed new staff position is provided on page 9.

RECOMMENDED "IMPLEMENTATION LEADS" FOR KEY INITIATIVES

Key Initiative	Lead Organization(s) or Department(s)
Places to Gather	"City Community Development & Pearland Economic Development Corporation"
Old Town Revitalization	City Community Development
Infill and Redevelopment	"City Community Development & Pearland Fire Department Code Enforcement"
Mobility and Infrastructure	City Engineering and Public Works
Parks and Recreation	City Parks and Recreation
Cultural Arts	Pearland Convention & Visitors Bureau
Business Development	"Pearland Chamber of Commerce & Pearland Economic Development Corporation"
Pearland Innovation Hub	Pearland Innovation Hub Advisory Board
Workforce Development	"Pearland Chamber of Commerce & Pearland Economic Development Corporation"
Diverse Talent	Pearland Chamber of Commerce
Site Development	Pearland Economic Development Corporation

STAFF CAPACITY RECOMMENDATIONS

BRS' principals have advised dozens of communities around the country that have implemented holistic economic development strategies. **The most successful of these implementation efforts share a common trait: they were driven and supported by committed professional staff.** As previously noted, the work of strategic implementation occurs primarily within organizations. Accordingly, sufficient professional staff capacity is a necessary condition for successful and timely implementation.

There are numerous public private, and nonprofit partners engaged in some aspect of holistic economic development in Pearland. These likely implementation partners have professional staffs consisting of knowledgeable and talented individuals dedicated to the success of their organization and community. The Pearland Prosperity Update has been designed to leverage the staff capacity of these entities, understanding that some job descriptions may need to be adjusted to account for new roles and responsibilities.

As previously discussed, however, additional organizational capacity is needed to advance priorities related to redevelopment. Accordingly, **BRS recommends the creation of one initial new staff position – Director of Redevelopment Initiatives – within the PEDC.** A brief overview of this role is provided on the following page. **The recommended position – including title, job description, and compensation – must ultimately be approved by the PEDC's Board of Directors in consultation with the Pearland City Council.**

Conversations with leaders also revealed a **need to maintain flexibility when it comes to future staffing needs** related to the Pearland Prosperity Update. For instance, stakeholders noted that additional capacity may be needed to activate certain recommendations within the Cultural Arts Master Plan currently under development. Stakeholders also speculated that if Old Town revitalization and infill redevelopment activities begin to accelerate, the City's Community Development Department would potentially need to add staff to accommodate additional planning and development work and complement the proposed Director of Redevelopment Initiatives role within the PEDC. And consistent with Strategic Recommendation E-2 in the Pearland Prosperity Update, leaders noted that the Parks Department is at or near capacity for hosting large-scale youth sports tournaments and that additional conversations are needed to determine the best way forward for attracting and supporting the operations (field maintenance, custodial services, etc.) of these events. Ultimately, **stakeholders recognize the important role that the public sector plays in supporting the community's success and prosperity;** BRS recommends that the City and PEDC periodically evaluate whether staffing levels are sufficient to support strategic implementation and respond effectively to future opportunities and challenges that may emerge.

Recommended New Staff Position Description – Director of Redevelopment Initiatives (PEDC)

The Director of Redevelopment Initiatives would work with private-sector developers and investors, City of Pearland staff, and other relevant stakeholders to advance redevelopment efforts proposed in the Pearland Prosperity Update. This principally includes recommendations within “Places to Gather,” “Old Town Revitalization,” and “Infill and Redevelopment” Key Initiatives and advancing the SH 35 Corridor Redevelopment Strategy and the Broadway Corridor Development Plan from SH 288 to SH 35. The Director would also help advance certain recommendations within the 2022 Pearland Retail Analysis (Strategic Recommendation G-5) that overlap with the PEDC’s mission of supporting primary job creation.

The Director of Redevelopment Initiatives should have a background in commercial real estate, development, planning, or a related field. The ideal candidate would also have a strong working knowledge of commercial real estate market conditions within the Greater Houston area and pre-established relationships with brokers, developers, and prospective investors. The Director would work with these private-sector partners to connect them to property owners and redevelopment opportunities within the City of Pearland. This individual would also work with staff in the City of Pearland’s Community Development department and other relevant partners to directly advance relevant Strategic Recommendations in the Pearland Prosperity Update. If deemed appropriate by all partners, the Director could also serve as a liaison between the private sector and City staff on issues related to redevelopment, helping to prioritize “speed to market” while maintaining a high standard of development quality.

BRS recommends that the Director of Redevelopment Initiatives report to the President of the PEDC. Estimated compensation costs for the position are provided in “3. Budget and Funding Considerations” beginning on page 22.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

As discussed under the “Lead Organizations” subheading, the Pearland Prosperity Update is not “the PEDC’s strategy” nor is it a plan for any single organization. It is instead a **community-level strategic plan** designed to ensure that Pearland remains a community of choice for people and businesses within the Greater Houston region. **Successful implementation of this type of holistic strategy requires centralized capacity to coordinate activities and communicate progress.** This has proven to be the case during the activation of Pearland 20/20 and the first Pearland Prosperity strategic plan; it is also consistent with BRS’ experience derived from working in communities around the country.

For the past two strategic implementation cycles, the PEDC has provided administrative support and communications services on behalf of the community. Based on conversations with a wide range of stakeholders in Pearland and our own observations of implementation progress and successes, **BRS recommends that the PEDC continues to coordinate the implementation of the Pearland Prosperity Update.**

In addition to activities that directly advance a component of the Pearland Prosperity update, BRS recommends that the PEDC performs the following functions in support of the overall implementation effort:

- **Serving as a “connector”** of various partner organizations and entities that are advancing one or more Strategic Recommendations or otherwise engaged in the implementation effort
- Providing **administrative support for the Pearland Prosperity Committee** (see the following page), including setting group membership, scheduling meetings, and managing internal communications
- Coordinating with community partners to **gather, track, and regularly update data indicators and activity measures** related to strategic implementation and overall community outcomes (see “4. Performance Measures”)
- Providing **regular updates** to implementation partners and investors about implementation activities and progress and launching the enhanced “internal communications” efforts detailed in Strategic Recommendation G-4
- Promoting the **Pearland Prosperity effort** to the Pearland community and external audiences across a variety of channels and **preparing an annual report** to highlight key accomplishments and impacts

The Implementation Budget in “3. Budget and Funding Considerations” includes estimated annual allocations to support meetings, communications, and other implementation coordination activities. Similar to the approach outlined for the previous Pearland Prosperity plan, BRS recommends that the PEDC continue to designate a “point person” as the primary contact for planning meetings and managing communications.

PEARLAND PROSPERITY COMMITTEE AND THE ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS

Public, private, and non-profit partners understand from experience that a **coordinated, collaborative approach** is needed to successfully activate a holistic economic development strategy. At the conclusion of the Pearland 20/20 process in 2013, Steering Committee members opted to continue working together as a committee to guide the activation of the strategic plan. While membership has evolved significantly over time, this group effectively remains intact today as the “Pearland Prosperity Committee” (previously referred to as the “Implementation Committee”) that guided the development of the Pearland Prosperity Update.

Overall, volunteers can be instrumental in activating a strategic plan, but their role must be carefully considered and managed. Communities must strike a balance between engaging key leaders on issues where they can make an impact without asking too much of their time or energy. Experience has also shown that – with some limited exceptions – volunteer-driven efforts that lack the support of professional staff typically fail to gain traction.

Based on conversations with members of the Pearland Prosperity Committee and other key leaders in Pearland, BRS advises that **Pearland has found the model that best fits its needs.** At the outset of the Pearland Prosperity Update process, stakeholders who had been involved with strategic implementation received the following online survey prompt: “How would you rate your overall experience with Pearland Prosperity implementation?” Participants were asked to evaluate this statement on a scale of 1 to 5 stars, with 1 being “worst experience” and 5 being “best.” Stakeholders returned an average rating of 4.2 stars, with 17 out of 20 respondents rating the experience a 4 or a 5. This is consistent with qualitative feedback from Pearland Prosperity Committee members, who generally reported positive views of the group and its role in supporting implementation. Additionally, stakeholders noted that the City, PEDC, Chamber, and other partners have leveraged and/or enhanced their staff capacity to support implementation.

Based on these factors, BRS recommends that the **Pearland Prosperity Committee remain intact** to guide the activation of the Pearland Prosperity Update and facilitate cross-sector collaborations among the many public, private, and nonprofit partners that will play a role in implementation. As was the case in prior implementation cycles, **the Pearland Prosperity Committee will be an advisory board with no formal governance or authority over any implementation partners.** Instead, the Committee will engage key partners to ensure that implementation is collaborative, effectively networked, and free of redundancies. Consistent with prior implementation cycles, the Committee will also ensure that the implementation of the Pearland Prosperity Update is flexible and responsive to issues, opportunities, and challenges that emerge as implementation

progresses.

Based on conversations with key stakeholders, BRS recommends the following with respect to the Pearland Prosperity Committee and volunteer roles for the upcoming implementation cycle:

MEMBERSHIP ADJUSTMENTS: The Pearland Prosperity Committee is comprised of leaders from a variety of entities with a role in advancing strategic implementation. Stakeholders noted, however, that the group previously lacked representation from lead implementation partners for the “Parks and Recreation” and “Cultural Arts” Key Initiatives. Accordingly, the PEDC Board voted at its January meeting to expand the Committee to include **two new permanent members: the chair of the Parks, Recreation & Beautification Board and the chair of the Pearland Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) Advisory Board.**

Stakeholders said that additional adjustments to Committee membership may be necessary as the next implementation cycle progresses. For instance, as revitalization efforts in Old Town ramp up, it may be desirable to include a staff member or other stakeholder who is directly involved with these activities. Stakeholders should consider rotating membership over time to help manage volunteer workloads and incorporate fresh perspectives to the group. Additionally, stakeholders noted the importance of striving to reflect Pearland’s diversity – in terms of age, gender, race/ethnicity, geography, and so on – in the Committee’s membership. Ultimately, the group’s membership should be **set by the PEDC’s Board of Directors with advisory input from the Committee** consistent with the practice in previous cycles.

MEETING SCHEDULE: BRS recommends that the Pearland Prosperity Committee hold **regular meetings on a quarterly basis** to receive staff updates on implementation progress, set priorities for the coming months, and help identify responses to new opportunities and challenges. In some instances, it may also be desirable to hold **special, topic-specific meetings** to address a major new development. For instance, as the Cultural Arts Master Plan is completed in 2024, BRS recommends that the Committee hold a special meeting to review the plan and determine how best to incorporate it into the Pearland Prosperity Update.

ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEER ROLES: The implementation documents for Pearland’s previous two strategic plans recommended multi-tiered volunteer structures, with “Work Groups” under the umbrella of the Pearland Prosperity Committee. For the upcoming implementation cycle, **BRS advises against creating standing volunteer working groups** to be respectful of volunteers’ time and keep implementation manageable. (The exception is the invitation-only working group that will serve as formal partnership framework for business and education as proposed in Strategic Recommendation I-3.) Should one or more issues emerge as “heavy lifts”

that warrant additional volunteer involvement, BRS recommends creating **temporary working groups** with a clear mandate and plans to disband upon completion of key tasks. The need for temporary working groups should ultimately be determined by the Committee in consultation with the PEDC Board.

2. ACTION MATRICES

This section provides a set of “matrices” for each of the 11 Key Initiatives in the Pearland Prosperity Update. These tables establish potential lead and support entities for all Strategic Recommendations within the strategic plan, as well as recommended launch dates for each component. This section begins, however, with an overview of priority actions that can be advanced in 2024, the first year of strategic implementation.

PRIORITY STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2024

Near the conclusion of the Pearland Prosperity Update process, BRS engaged numerous stakeholders in Pearland to cover various aspects of strategic implementation, including potential “priority actions” to advance in the first year of implementation, 2024. This included a group discussion at the Pearland Prosperity Committee’s January 10 meeting and a follow-up conversation with senior staff from the City of Pearland, PEDC, and Chamber. **BRS blended feedback from these discussions with its own experience to create the following list of 12 high-priority actions that partners should seek to advance this calendar year. This list is provided on the following page,** with the priority Strategic Recommendations listed in the order that they appear in the strategic plan.

Some of these high-priority actions can be effectively completed within the first year of implementation. Others may take longer to come to fruition but should nevertheless be started as soon as possible given their importance to the overall Pearland Prosperity Update effort. It is also important to emphasize that **this list of high-priority actions should not constitute the entirety of strategic implementation in year one;** at least some portion of all 11 Key Initiatives can and should be advanced in 2024.

Prior to the finalization of the Implementation Guidelines, BRS will work with leaders in Pearland to confirm that these are the right high-impact activities on which to place added importance in 2024. At the conclusion of each year of implementation, the Pearland Prosperity Committee should develop a recommended list of actions for implementation partners to prioritize in the following year.

PRIORITY STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2024

#	Recommendation
Places to Gather	
A-1	Cultivate relationships with key private-sector partners for creating gathering spaces
Old Town Revitalization	
B-2	Pursue near-term opportunities to leverage new residential development in Old Town
B-3	Identify a design solution for the Broadway Corridor that is conducive to walkable development
B-4	Create and advance a master plan for the Old Town area
Mobility and Infrastructure	
D-2	Ensure the successful activation of the Broadway / FM 518 widening and reconstruction project
Cultural Arts	
F-1	Support the implementation of the City of Pearland's approved Cultural Arts Master Plan
Pearland Innovation Hub	
H-1	Position the Pearland Innovation Hub's location at Spacio.us as the service delivery "focal point"
H-2	Right-size the Pro-Active Coaching Program and enhance efforts to identify coaches and members
H-3	Increase networking opportunities and special events for Pearland's entrepreneurs
Workforce Development	
I-3	Establish a formal partnership framework connecting business and education
Site Development	
K-1	Continue to position the Lower Kirby District and SH 35 as priority areas for development
K-2	Continue to proactively assemble and prepare development sites
K-3	Continue to ensure that sites are supported by best-in-class infrastructure and amenities

ACTION MATRICES

The following pages contain matrices for each of the 11 Key Initiatives in the Pearland Prosperity Update. The matrices represent BRS' recommendations to orient implementation partners around potential lead and support entities for all Strategic Recommendations within the strategic plan, as well as recommended launch dates for each component. They are intended as a starting point for partners in Pearland as they build formal work plans for strategic implementation. It should be reemphasized that partner organizations and entities will ultimately have the final say on implementation roles.

The matrix for each Key Initiative includes the following information:

Strategic Recommendation: The Strategic Recommendations within each Key Initiative, with alphanumeric numbering (A-1, A-2, and so on) corresponding to the Pearland Prosperity Update strategic plan document. The priority strategic recommendations for 2024 listed on the preceding page are highlighted in blue.

Lead Implementation Partner(s): The organization(s) or entity(ies) that will be primarily responsible for the activation of a recommendation; an abbreviation key for potential lead and support implementation partners is provided on the following page.

Support Implementation Partner(s): The most actively involved organizations and entities that could assist with or influence the implementation of a recommendation or its components (note that this list is not intended as a full list of all potential partners).

Status: Refers to whether the implementation of a Strategic Recommendation encompasses an Ongoing, Enhanced, or New program of work.

Launch Date: BRS' guidance on proposed launch years for each recommendation.

ABBREVIATION KEY

The following organizations are abbreviated as potential lead and support entities for the various Strategic Recommendations in the action matrices. It should be emphasized that this list is not intended to be final or comprehensive. Professional staff from lead organizations – with the support of the PEDC and Pearland Prosperity Committee members – should work with all prospective implementation partners to confirm organizational roles at the outset of strategic implementation.

Abbv.	Implementation Partner	Abbv.	Implementation Partner
ACC	Alvin Community College	MMD	Municipal Management District(s)
AISD	Alvin Independent School District	NP	Nonprofit organizations
ARTS	Local arts groups	OWN	Property owners
BC	Brazoria County	PARKS	City Parks and Recreation
BEP	New biz-education working group (see I-3)	PEDC	Pearland Economic Development Corporation
BIZ	Local business community	PHIL	Philanthropic and grantmaking organizations
CANNON	The Cannon	PIH	Pearland Innovation Hub
CD	City Community Development	PISD	Pearland Independent School District
CHAMBER	Pearland Chamber of Commerce	PTC	Pearland Town Center mgmt. and ownership
CODE	Pearland Fire Dept. Code Enforcement	PYP	Pearland Young Professionals
COUNCIL	Pearland City Council	RE	Real estate brokers, developers, & investors
CVB	Pearland Convention & Visitor's Bureau	SBDC	Small Business Development Center
DD4	Brazoria Drainage District No. 4	SJC	San Jacinto College
E&PW	City Engineering and Public Works	SPACIO.US	Spacio.us
E&T	All other education and training partners	TT	Team Texas
EAHPR	Economic Alliance Houston Port Region	TWC	Texas Workforce Comission
EDABC	ED Alliance for Brazoria County	TxDOT	Texas Department of Transportation
EDT	Texas Economic Development & Tourism	TxEDC	Texas Economic Development Corporation
EE	Regional entrepreneurial ecosystem partners	UHCL	University of Houston Clear Lake
H-GAC	Houston-Galveston Area Council	USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
HC	Harris County	UTIL	Utilities
HCC	Chamber Health Care Committee	UWBC	United Way of Brazoria County
HCFC	Harris County Flood Control District	UWGH	United Way Greater Houston
HOA	Homeowners associations	WB	City Water Billing
KPB	Keep Pearland Beautiful	WSGC	Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast
METRO	Metropolitan Transit Authority		

Initiative / Recommendation	Status	Implementing Partners		Launch Date		
		Lead	Support	Y1	Y2	Y3-5
Places to Gather						
A-1: Cultivate relationships with key private-sector partners for creating gathering spaces	Existing	PEDC	BIZ; CHAMBER; RE			
A-2: Actively pursue a vibrant mixed-use entertainment district in the Lower Kirby District	Existing	CD; PEDC	BIZ; CHAMBER; COUNCIL; CVB; HC; MMD; OWN; PARKS; RE			
A-3: Work with Pearland Town Center stakeholders to ensure the area’s long-term success and vibrancy	Existing	CD; PEDC; PTC	BIZ; CHAMBER; CVB; PARKS; RE			
A-4: Position additional sites around Pearland as potential locations for new quality of place amenities	Existing	CD; PEDC	BIZ; CHAMBER; COUNCIL; OWN; RE			
Old Town Revitalization						
B-1: Continue to implement infrastructure improvements in the Old Town and SH 35 Corridor areas	Ongoing	CD; PEDC	WB; E&PW; OWN; TxDOT			
B-2: Pursue near-term opportunities to leverage new residential development in Old Town	Existing	PEDC	BIZ; CHAMBER; CD; OWN; RE			
B-3: Identify a design solution for the Broadway Corridor that is conducive to walkable development	Ongoing	CD	H-GAC; OWN; PARKS; TxDOT			
B-4: Create and advance a master plan for the Old Town area	New	CD	All relevant public and private stakeholders and residents			
B-5: Ensure that tools, resources, and staff capacity are available tosupport Old Town revitalization	New	CD; PEDC	BIZ; CHAMBER; COUNCIL			

Initiative / Recommendation	Status	Implementing Partners		Launch Date		
		Lead	Support	Y1	Y2	Y3-5
Infill and Redevelopment						
C-1: Leverage and promote software tool to improve the transparency of the development process	Existing	CD	CODE; PEDC; OWN; RE			
C-2: Create additional technical assistance to ease the development process	New	CD	OWN; PEDC; RE			
C-3: Ensure that Pearland's commercial properties are well-maintained and in compliance with codes	Existing	CODE	CD; OWN; PEDC			
C-4: Encourage multifamily and compact residential uses on infill and redevelopment sites	Existing	CD	COUNCIL; OWN; PEDC; RE			
C-5: Actively recruit residential developments and amenities that allow Pearland's residents to age in place	New	CD	COUNCIL; HCC; OWN; PEDC; RE			
Mobility and Infrastructure						
D-1: Continue to support the long-term maintenance of Pearland's infrastructure	Ongoing	E&PW	COUNCIL; KPB; PEDC; PARKS; UTIL			
D-2: Ensure the successful activation of the Broadway / FM 518 widening and reconstruction project	Ongoing	E&PW	CHAMBER; H-GAC; OWN; PEDC; TxDOT; UTIL			
D-3: Advance the planning, design, and construction of priority road projects	Ongoing	E&PW	BC; PEDC; TxDOT			
D-4: Continue to seek state and federal funding and other resources for transportation projects	Ongoing	E&PW	BIZ; CHAMBER; COUNCIL			
D-5: Seek to accelerate activation of the Multi-Modal Master Plan and Clear Creek Trail Master Plan	Existing	E&PW; PARKS	CD; PEDC; PHIL			
D-6: Advance the development and activation of the Pearland Transit Needs Assessment and Plan	Ongoing	CD	H-GAC; METRO			
D-7: Continue to advance infrastructure projects that improve drainage and stormwater management	Ongoing	E&PW	DD4; WB; HCFC; MMD; PEDC; USACE			

Initiative / Recommendation	Status	Implementing Partners		Launch Date		
		Lead	Support	Y1	Y2	Y3-5
Parks and Recreation						
E-1: Continue to implement the Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan	Ongoing	PARKS	CVB; E&PW; PEDC; PHIL			
E-2: Ensure that Pearland’s parks have sufficient resources and staff	Existing	PARKS	COUNCIL; PHIL			
E-3: Seek to expand Pearland’s sports fields and ensure equitable distribution across the community	Existing	CVB; PARKS	COUNCIL; PEDC			
E-4: Evaluate tools to ensure the long-term sustainability of privately owned park facilities	New	PARKS	HOA; PHIL			
Cultural Arts						
F-1: Support the implementation of the City of Pearland’s approved Cultural Arts Master Plan	New	CVB	ARTS; BIZ; CHAMBER; COUNCIL; PEDC; PHIL			
F-2: Assess local support for establishing a branded cultural arts district in Pearland	New	CVB	TBD pending completion of the Cultural Arts Master Plan			
F-3: Continue efforts to create a sense of place in Pearland activity districts and public spaces	Existing	CVB	HOA; OWN; PARKS; PHIL			

Initiative / Recommendation	Status	Implementing Partners		Launch Date		
		Lead	Support	Y1	Y2	Y3-5
Business Development						
G-1: Continue core business attraction and marketing initiatives to grow primary jobs	Ongoing	PEDC	BIZ; CHAMBER; CD; EAHPR; EDABC; EDT; OWN; RE; TT; TxEDC			
G-2: Enhance targeted marketing efforts for the biotechnology and medical manufacturing sectors	Existing	PEDC	BIZ; CHAMBER; CD; EAHPR; EDABC; EDT; OWN; RE; TT; TxEDC			
G-3: Continue to engage Pearland’s primary employers through the BizConnect program	Ongoing	CHAMBER; PEDC	BIZ			
G-4: Expand internal communications capabilities to reach a broader range of Pearland stakeholders	Existing	PEDC	BIZ; CHAMBER; HOA; NP			
G-5: Implement recommendations from the 2022 Pearland Retail Analysis	Existing	OWN; RE	PEDC			
Pearland Innovation Hub						
H-1: Position the Pearland Innovation Hub’s location at Spacio.us as the service delivery focal point	New	PIH; SPACIO. US	CANNON; CHAMBER; EE; PEDC; SBDC			
H-2: Right-size the Pro-Active Coaching Program and enhance efforts to identify coaches and members	Existing	PIH	BIZ; CHAMBER; CANNON; EE; PEDC; SBDC			
H-3: Increase networking opportunities and special events for Pearland’s entrepreneurs	Existing	PIH	BIZ; CANNON; CHAMBER; EE; SBDC			
H-4: Connect entrepreneurs to professional services and other regional ecosystem resources	Existing	PIH	CANNON; CHAMBER; EE; SBDC			
H-5: Support diverse retail and hospitality startups that enhance Pearland’s quality of place	Existing	PIH	BIZ; CHAMBER; OWN; RE			

Initiative / Recommendation	Status	Implementing Partners		Launch Date		
		Lead	Support	Y1	Y2	Y3-5
Workforce Development						
I-1: Continue to provide Pearland’s employers with customized workforce assistance	Ongoing	PEDC	BIZ; ACC; E&T; SJC TWC; UHCL; WSGC			
I-2: Develop and promote a community resource network (CRN)	New	PEDC	BEP; CHAMBER; NP; UWBC; UWGH			
I-3: Establish a formal partnership framework connecting business and education	New	CHAMBER; PEDC	BIZ; ACC; AISD; E&T; PISD; PYP; SJC; UHCL; WSGC			
I-4: Create formal Career Pathways to create opportunities for residents and support key sectors	New	BEP; CHAMBER; PEDC	BIZ; ACC; AISD; E&T; PISD; PYP; SJC; UHCL; WSGC			
I-5: Continue to support the WorkInPearland initiative and online portal	Existing	CHAMBER	BEP; BIZ; PEDC; PYP			
I-6: Pursue the development of physical training spaces in and around Pearland	New	CHAMBER; PEDC	BEP; BIZ; PEDC; PYP			
Diverse Talent						
J-1: Sustain and enhance the Pearland Chamber of Commerce’s diversity initiatives	Existing	CHAMBER	BIZ; PYP			
J-2: Enhance the WorkInPearland platform to attract diverse talent to Pearland	Existing	CHAMBER	BIZ; PEDC; PYP			
J-3: Expand networking opportunities for diverse Pearland residents	New	CHAMBER	BIZ; PYP			
Site Development						
K-1: Continue to position the Lower Kirby District and SH 35 as priority areas for development	Ongoing	PEDC	OWN; RE			
K-2: Continue to proactively assemble and prepare development sites	Ongoing	PEDC	CD; OWN; RE			
K-3: Continue to ensure that sites are supported by best-in-class infrastructure and amenities	Ongoing	PEDC	E&PW; OWN; RE			

3. BUDGET AND FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

The Pearland Prosperity Update is an ambitious program of work that must be staffed and funded. To the extent possible, partners in Pearland should leverage existing staff and organizational capacity to advance the 11 Key Initiatives and their component Strategic Recommendations. But implementation of the updated strategic plan cannot occur without the commitment of new resources.

To present a snapshot of what might comprise this new spending, BRS has prepared high-level guidance for partners to consider as they begin strategic implementation. The following page provides estimates for an Implementation Budget to provide the PEDC and its partners with expectations for annual and five-year budgeting. This is not a comprehensive budget for the activation of the full Pearland Prosperity Update. There are simply too many independent variables to arrive at a defensible projection, while providing estimates for certain strategic recommendations – e.g., assembly and preparation of a new economic development site – is beyond the scope of this process. It is also infeasible to assess the fiscal responsibilities of every partner that will be engaged in strategic implementation. Not only would this result in dozens of separate organizational budgets, but specific implementation roles must still be confirmed by the respective organizations and entities identified in these Guidelines. Instead, the Implementation Budget provides estimates for new expenditures that will be required to activate a new staff position as well as other new or expanded programs and efforts that can be fully defined at this time.

On the pages following the Implementation Budget, BRS has provided high-level guidance on potential funding sources and funding considerations for each of the 11 Key Initiatives in the Pearland Prosperity Update. These synopses also provide details on what components of each Key Initiative are included in the Implementation Budget.

#	Component	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	TOTAL
Staff Position							
Multiple	Director of Redevelopment Initiatives	\$23,400	\$149,500	\$154,733	\$160,148	\$165,753	\$653,534
Program and Operational Costs							
B-4	Old Town area master plan	\$350,000					\$350,000
C-2	Creation of a "development toolkit"		\$15,000				\$15,000
C-3	Contribution to "distressed properties fund"				\$250,000	\$500,000	\$750,000
C-4	Development of UDC update	\$300,000					\$300,000
G-2	Enhanced marketing for biotechnology / medical mfg.	\$20,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$180,000
G-4	Enhanced "internal communications" activities	\$10,000	\$25,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$125,000
G-5	Enhanced retail marketing activities		\$15,000	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$40,000	\$120,000
I-2	Development and promotion of CRN resources		\$10,000				\$10,000
I-3	Management of formal partnership framework	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$70,000
I-5; J-2	Enhancement of the WorkInPearland initiative	\$7,500	\$50,000	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$80,000
J-3	Enhanced networking opportunities for diverse talent				\$25,000	\$25,000	\$50,000
TOTAL		\$720,900	\$319,500	\$277,233	\$562,648	\$823,253	\$2,703,534

FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS FOR KEY INITIATIVES

Places to Gather	
Funding considerations:	New developments and investments should be led by the private sector, though some form of public incentive may be necessary to make a specific project viable; potential incentives should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the PEDC Board, City Council, and other relevant governing bodies. Other costs would primarily include staff time for the PEDC, Department of Community Development, etc.
Potential funding sources:	Primarily private-sector investment; potentially leveraged by incentives from the PEDC, MMDs, and/or other public-sector sources; Implementation Budget (see below)
Covered in Implementation Budget:	A portion of the Director of Redevelopment Initiatives' time may be devoted to working with owners, real estate professionals, and other stakeholders to advance development projects that incorporate gathering places.
Old Town Revitalization	
Funding considerations:	Stakeholders anticipate that revitalizing Old Town and attracting private-sector investment in the area will require public incentives and investments over a long period of time. Costs may include ongoing and future infrastructure upgrades (including a redesigned Broadway Corridor), project-specific incentives, and potential catalytic public-sector investments (e.g., parks, public art, etc.). The proposed master plan should provide specific guidance on needed tools and resources.
Potential funding sources:	Implementation budget (see below); private-sector investment; potentially leveraged by incentives; PEDC, City, TxDOT, and other public sources for transportation and infrastructure upgrades
Covered in Implementation Budget:	"The Implementation Budget includes a line-item for the development of a new master plan for the Old Town area; the Director of Redevelopment Initiatives will likely also play a significant role in supporting Old Town redevelopment activities."
Infill and Redevelopment	
Funding considerations:	Infill and redevelopment projects will primarily be market-driven, though staff time will be required to provide technical assistance, support "speed to market" in the development process, etc.
Potential funding sources:	City and PEDC for staff time; Implementation Budget (see below)
Covered in Implementation Budget:	The Implementation Budget includes an allocation for the "redevelopment toolkit" and reflects the anticipated cost of the update to Pearland's Unified Development Code (UDC). The budget also proposes increased contributions to a "distressed properties fund" in years 4-5. The Director of Redevelopment Initiatives will likely also play a significant role.

FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS FOR KEY INITIATIVES, CONTINUED

Mobility and Infrastructure	
Funding considerations:	Capital projects for transportation and drainage are cost-intensive but local government investment can be used to leverage external funding from regional, state, and federal sources. Additionally, funding for trail enhancements could also be supplemented with competitive public and private grants. Stakeholders also emphasized the importance of budgeting for the long-term maintenance of new and existing infrastructure when setting investment priorities. This Key Initiative will also require significant staff time from the City, PEDC, etc.
Potential funding sources:	PEDC, City, TxDOT, and various other public sources for transportation and infrastructure upgrades; competitive grants to supplement trails projects; City and other public-sector funds to cover the long-term maintenance of infrastructure
Covered in Implementation Budget:	n/a
Parks and Recreation	
Funding considerations:	The Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan provides guidance on funding needs and potential funding sources; as of 2020, the plan estimated approximately \$3.1M in remedial recommendations and \$24.5M in near- and long-term capital improvement projects. For certain projects such as sports field expansions, there is a potential opportunity to leverage PEDC and CVB funds to support capital upgrades. A "recapitalization fund" for privately owned park facilities would require private or philanthropic investment, though Parks and Recreation staff time could be leveraged to provide technical assistance. The City should consider working with the CVB and other partners to ensure that parks are adequately staffed to accommodate events such as youth sports tournaments, potentially through enhanced user fees.
Potential funding sources:	Parks and Recreation budget for public park enhancements and operations; City bond funds as approved by voters potential to support eligible capital projects with PEDC and/or CVB funds; additional funding sources identified in the Parks master plan; private and/or grant funding for a recapitalization fund
Covered in Implementation Budget:	n/a

Cultural Arts

Funding considerations:	Infill and redevelopment projects will primarily be market-driven, though staff time will be required to provide technical assistance, support "speed to market" in the development process, etc.
Potential funding sources:	City and PEDC for staff time; Implementation Budget (see below)
Covered in Implementation Budget:	The Implementation Budget includes an allocation for the "redevelopment toolkit" and reflects the anticipated cost of the update to Pearland's Unified Development Code (UDC). The budget also proposes increased contributions to a "distressed properties fund" in years 4-5. The Director of Redevelopment Initiatives will likely also play a significant role.

Business Development

Funding considerations:	"Stakeholders advise that the PEDC's existing marketing budget and the current BizConnect contract are sufficient to carry out "core" marketing and BRE efforts, though additional funds will be needed to expand marketing efforts around biotechnology and medical manufacturing. The Implementation Budget includes additional funds for other expanded marketing and communications activities."
Potential funding sources:	PEDC; City; Implementation Budget (see below)
Covered in Implementation Budget:	"The Implementation Budget proposes increased funding for three areas in which additional marketing and communications expenditures are needed: external marketing to promote Pearland as a destination for biotechnology and medical manufacturing, external marketing to retail establishments / developers / investors, and enhanced "internal communications" to increase awareness of activities and outcomes."

Pearland Innovation Hub

Funding considerations:	"The Pearland Innovation Hub is principally funded through investment from the PEDC, with Spacio.us providing support in the form of office facilities. Programmatic adjustments can be accommodated by reallocating existing funds from coaching to networking and other events. PIH and its partners should seek additional opportunities for revenue enhancement (e.g., competitive grants), sponsorships, in-kind gifts, etc. to further strengthen the organization."
Potential funding sources:	"Operating subsidy from the PEDC; potential program revenue; potential contributions from competitive grants or related sources; potential in-kind gifts and donations"
Covered in Implementation Budget:	n/a

Workforce Development

Funding considerations: "A significant portion of the work in this Key Initiative entails staff time to work directly with companies and education and training providers; the Chamber and PEDC allocated and/or added this staff capacity during the implementation of the previous Pearland Prosperity plan. New expenditures for coordination and collaboration are covered by the Implementation Budget. Education and training partners may need to examine programs and budgets as employer needs evolve and Career Pathways come online."

Potential funding sources: PEDC and Chamber for staff time; Implementation Budget (see below)

Covered in Implementation Budget: "The Implementation Budget includes an annual allocation for actual costs associated with the management and administration of the ""formal partnership network"" and a line-item in year 2 to cover potential research costs associated with assembling information for the community resource network (CRN). The budget also proposes an annual contribution to the enhanced WorkinPearland initiative."

Diverse Talent

Funding considerations: Primary costs associated with this Key Initiative will be staff time that can be accommodated with existing Chamber capacity. The Implementation Budget includes allocations for actual costs associated with enhancing the WorkinPearland initiative and expanding networking opportunities for diverse talent.

Potential funding sources: Existing Chamber budget; Implementation Budget (see below)

Covered in Implementation Budget: Year 2 of the Implementation Budget includes an additional investment into the WorkinPearland initiative to incorporate a brand and messaging for Pearland's talent diversity assets. The budget also includes allocations in years 4 and 5 to operate and promote networking opportunities for diverse talent, though these expenses could be offset with sponsorships and in-kind donations.

Site Development

Funding considerations: The PEDC has been preparing and promoting development sites for many years, and stakeholders said the organization has sufficient capacity to fund this work over the course of the next five years. Additional public-sector investment may be needed for utility and infrastructure upgrades.

Potential funding sources: PEDC for capital and planning costs associated with site assembly and preparation; potential additional public investment (City, MMDs, etc.) for needed infrastructure upgrades

Covered in Implementation Budget: n/a

4. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measurement is essential to the implementation of a holistic economic development strategy. Metrics are needed to assess progress and help investors and partner organizations determine whether implementation is producing the desired return on investment. More broadly, metrics can help a community determine whether it is working toward high-level strategy goals. BRS recommends that partners in the Pearland establish, track, and report a set of implementation metrics for the Pearland Prosperity Update.

This section contains several tables with recommended performance measures. The first table, shown at the top of the following page, recommends a set of “topline” metrics that can assess whether the community is progressing toward its Core Goal: “Pearland will be the community of choice for PEOPLE and BUSINESS in our region.” This is followed by several tables with additional performance measures that can help partners determine progress toward each of the Pearland Prosperity Update’s 11 Key Initiatives.

BRS has provided a potential data source for each proposed metric. Some measures must be tracked locally and are typically things that can be directly influenced through successful implementation. For instance, partners can track the number of entrepreneurs assisted through the Pearland Innovation Hub’s Pro-Active Coaching Program as discussed in Strategic Recommendation H-2. The proposed metrics also make extensive use of data from The National Citizen Survey (NCS) and The National Business Survey (NBS). Pearland has participated in these biannual surveys since 2015 and 2021, respectively, providing a strong baseline of data on resident and business opinions into relevant topics that stakeholders can leverage to track shifting perceptions on key topics going forward.

Other proposed metrics are derived from government or proprietary sources and are typically influenced by innumerable factors beyond the control of any organization or community. As an example, the total number of jobs based within Pearland will be influenced to a degree by the health of the regional, national, and global economies. Accordingly, BRS recommends that any numeric goals related to implementation metrics be utilized internally. When reporting government or proprietary data to the public, BRS recommends that Pearland’s performance be assessed relative to the nation, the Greater Houston Region and other comparison communities whenever possible to account for external factors such as economic cycles. Pearland has utilized this practice by commissioning regular “City Benchmarking” studies that compare the community’s performance relative to a competitive set of high-performing suburbs in Texas and beyond. BRS recommends that Pearland continue this practice and consider updating the list of data indicators to better align with new strategic priorities reflected in the Pearland Prosperity Update.

Indicator	Potential Source(s)
A Community of Choice for People	
Annual net domestic and international migration per 1,000 residents	Census Pop. Est.
% change in population aged 25 to 44	Census Pop. Est.
% of residents aged 25+ with at least a bachelor's degree or higher	ACS
% of residents rating quality of life as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
% of residents rating the overall image and reputation of Pearland as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
% of residents who are "very" or "somewhat" likely to recommend living in Pearland	NCS
A Community of Choice for Business	
Biennial % change in private jobs based in Pearland	JobsEQ or similar
Biennial % change in private primary jobs based in Pearland	JobsEQ or similar
Commercial property taxes as a % of general fund	City Audit
Sales taxes as % of general fund	City Audit
% of businesses rating Pearland as a "good" or "excellent" place to do business	NBS
% of businesses rating the overall image and reputation of Pearland as "good" or "excellent"	NBS
% of businesses that are "somewhat" or "very" likely to recommend operating a business in Pearland	NBS

Indicator	Potential Source(s)
Places to Gather	
\$ value of private capital investment in new gathering places (better define)	PEDC / City
Annual visitors generated from Pearland Town Center	PEDC / Placer
Visitor counts for events at potential new gathering places	CVB / Placer
% of residents rating the vibrancy of downtown/commercial areas as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
% of residents rating public places where people want to spend time as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
% of businesses rating lack of community amenities to attract high-skill workers as a "moderate" or "major" challenge	NCS
Old Town Revitalization	
\$ value of permitted private investment in Old Town area	PEDC / City
Annual visitors generated in Old Town area	PEDC / Placer
% of residents rating the preservation of the historical or cultural character of the community as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
Other metrics as prescribed by the completed Old Town area master plan	
Infill and Redevelopment	
% of commercial plans approved on initial review	City
% of commercial plans approved on second resubmittal	City
Average time from submittal to approval for commercial plans	City
# of housing units in 2+ unit buildings permitted	City
# of age 55+ housing units permitted	City
% of businesses rating the quality of building permits and inspections as "good" or "excellent"	NBS
% of businesses rating the quality of code enforcement as	NBS
% of residents rating the quality of code enforcement as	NCS
% of residents rating variety of housing options as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
% of residents rating the overall quality of new development as "good" or "excellent"	NCS

Mobility and Infrastructure

# of lane miles of new roadway upgrades	City / TxDOT
# of linear miles of new trails and sidewalks	City / TxDOT
\$ value of outside funding leveraged for infrastructure improvements	City / TxDOT
% of businesses rating government communications during construction as a "good" or "excellent"	NBS
% of residents rating the ease of travel by car as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
% of residents rating the ease of travel by bicycle as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
% of residents rating the ease of walking as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
% of residents who have walked or biked instead of driving in the past 12 months	NCS
% of residents rating the availability of paths or walking trails as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
Other milestones and metrics as prescribed in corridor improvement plans	

Parks and Recreation

Total city park acreage (public only)	City
Total city park acreage (private)	City
Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents (public only)	City
Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents (public and private)	City
% of residents within a 10-minute walk of a park facility (public or private)	City / Placer
Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) positions in City Parks and Recreation	City
Annual operating expenditures of City Parks and Recreation	City
Level of service metrics for athletic fields	City
% of residents rating the overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
Other metrics as prescribed in the Parks Recreation, Open Spaces and Trail Master Plan	

Cultural Arts

% of residents rating community support for the arts as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
% of residents rating opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
% of residents rating opportunities to attend special events and festivals as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
Other metrics as prescribed in the completed Cultural Arts Master Plan	

Business Development

Total city park acreage (public only)	City
Total city park acreage (private)	City
Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents (public only)	City
Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents (public and private)	City
% of residents within a 10-minute walk of a park facility (public or private)	City / Placer
Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) positions in City Parks and Recreation	City
Annual operating expenditures of City Parks and Recreation	City
Level of service metrics for athletic fields	City
% of residents rating the overall quality of parks and recreation opportunities as "good" or "excellent"	NCS

Pearland Innovation Hub

# of self-employed jobs based in Pearland	JobsEQ or similar
# of jobs created by firms assisted through Innovation Hub programs	PIH
# of entrepreneurs and small businesses assisted through Pro-Active Coaching	PIH
# of networking events held for entrepreneurs	PIH
Attendance at networking events held for entrepreneurs	PIH
# of entrepreneurs referred to professional services and other resources	PIH
Other metrics as prescribed in the Pearland Innovation Hub's existing Performance Metrics and Targets	

Workforce Development

% of jobs based in Pearland held by residents	LEHD
# of firms receiving customized workforce assistance	PEDC
# of users accessing information from the Community Resource Network	PEDC
# of private firms and education/training partners participating in the working group	PEDC / Chamber
# of students enrolled in relevant career and training programs	TEA / ed. partners
# of HS and postsecondary enrolled in relevant career and training programs	TEA / ed. partners
# of unique users of WorkinPearland portal	Chamber
# of job connections resulting from WorkinPearland Portal	Chamber
# of job postings listed in WorkinPearland Portal	Chamber
# of career exploration events held in Pearland	PEDC/Chamber
% of businesses rating "lack of trade schools and other adult training programs" as a "moderate" or "major" challenge	NBS
% of residents rating Pearland as a "good" or "excellent" place to work	NCS

Diverse Talent

Diversity Index	Census Pop. Est.
# of participants in Knowledge Series events	Chamber
Attendance at networking events held for diverse talent	Chamber
% of residents rating community performance making all residents feel welcome as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
% of residents rating community performance attracting people from diverse backgrounds as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
% of residents rating community performance valuing/respecting residents from diverse backgrounds as "good" or "excellent"	NCS
# of unique users of WorkinPearland portal	Chamber

Site Development

Acreage of new sites prepared with PEDC assistance	PEDC
# of jobs located at PEDC-assisted sites	PEDC
\$ value of capital investment at PEDC	PEDC / City
\$ of net return on investment to Pearland from PEDC	PEDC / City